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A CANDID AND CONCILIATORY

REVIEW

OF THE LATE

CORRESPONDENCE

OF THE

Reverend Dr. Worcester with the Reverend William E. Channing,

ON THE

Subject of Unitarianism.

BY A SERIOUS INQUIRER.

——— “ And not a little influence is exerted to prevent people from reading—more than one side. Still, however, there are many who do read and will read both sides. The points in discussion are among the most important that could be offered to the attention of the christian community. Though some ill effects may ensue, as, in a world like this, is always to be expected, when any thing is attempted for the cause of truth ; yet the persuasion, I believe, is continually extending and gaining strength, that the good effects will greatly preponderate.” . . . *Dr. Worcester.*

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DEAR SIR,

IN compliance with your urgent and repeated request, I take my pen, after much, and serious deliberation, to communicate to you "some of my thoughts" respecting the late correspondence of the Rev. Dr. Worcester, with the Rev. Mr. Channing, "on the subject of Unitarianism."

In doing this, I wish to appear rather as an inquirer than a judge.—My inquiries, if not exclusively, will principally relate to Dr. Worcester's views and arguments in relation to the "doctrine of the Trinity," and the "persons" who are supposed to constitute a "Triune God."

I desire to come to these subjects of inquiry with my mind duly impressed with their magnitude and solemn importance, and with a strong conviction of the difficulties which they involve. Fervently praying for Divine illumination and guidance, I shall inquire, in the first place, whether the Doctor's views of

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY,

are to be admitted as correct? This, it seems, is, "upon the whole, your belief."—A belief, which, if well founded, I most sincerely hope will be strengthened and immovably established in your own mind, and become universal. But as I cannot admit the Doctor's views of this subject as "*unquestionably*" correct, I must be permitted to question, before I can undoubtingly receive them.

In his Second Letter to Mr. Channing, Dr. Worcester observes, p. 30, "On the authority of the Scriptures, orthodox christians believe that the one Jehovah exists in a Trinity, called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These we call *persons*, because we have no better word by which to denote the distinction," &c.

In his Third Letter, p p. 19, 20, 24, 31, 33, 69, the Doctor says, "The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are either three Divine Persons, *united in one Godhead*, or else three *separate Divine Beings*. The former is the ortho-

dox doctrine." "Orthodox christians hold that the three Divine Persons are *united in one Godhead*." "They exist, and act, and are blessed forevermore, as one God." "That three Divine Persons are one God, or that the one God exists in three Divine Persons, is revealed with sufficient clearness." "No one can say, that the supposition of three Persons in one God is contrary to reason." "It is a well attested fact, that, by the great body of christians from the days of the Apostles to the present, the deniers of the Trinity, or of the proper Deity and atonement of Jesus Christ, have been regarded as being eminently subverters of the Gospel."—Such are Dr. Worcester's statements of the doctrine of the Trinity; and in his Second Letter, p. 26, he says, addressing Mr. Channing, "We worship, Sir, THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST. Do you worship this same God?"

Before I consider the arguments urged in support of this doctrine, I deem it necessary, to ascertain what the doctrine *is*, or what is to be understood by *three Divine Persons united in one Godhead, or God*; as otherwise words may be used without any definite or intelligible ideas; nor can it be satisfactorily determined how any argument applies to the subject. What then are we to understand by the term *persons*, as used by Dr. W.? and in what does their union consist, by which they are constituted one God? Does he mean by Persons, *modes* or *relations* of God, such as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier? As some things occur in his Letters which seem to favour this supposition, I am not entirely satisfied that this is not his meaning. Some of the most distinguished Trinitarian writers explicitly say, "This is what we mean, and *all* we mean, when we say that God is three Persons." And this, I am persuaded, is all that *many* reputed Trinitarians believe in relation to the subject. If Dr. W. holds this doctrine, you, Sir, probably admit it as correct. But you will permit me to ask, Is the term *persons*, ever used in Scripture, to denote the three relations of God—*Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier*? Did these relations *always* exist in God, even before any created being existed? Are these relations or modes to be considered as objects of worship, instead of God himself, in whom they exist? The advocates of this figurative, or metaphorical Trinity, ought very seriously to consider these questions, and vindicate their doctrine, if they can do it, from the charge of "disguised Unitarianism," and themselves from the suspicion of holding a *form* of Trinitarian words, while they deny the *substance* of the Trinitarian doctrine.

But the doctrine as above stated, would not, I am inclined to believe, be admitted by Dr. W. as correct. His defini-

tion of *persons* can hardly be supposed to be consistent with it. "They" (the three Divine Persons) he admits, Letter 3d, p. 29, "are really and truly intelligent agents, each possessing all divine attributes, and performing in union with the other two, all divine works." In his First Letter, p. 27, he says, "Between a *being* essentially divine, as by us the Saviour (the Son of God) is held to be, and a mere creature, however 'exalted,' there is, you will readily admit, an infinite disparity." In Letter 3d, p. 24, he speaks of the "Son as essentially equal, and one with the Father." Of the Holy Spirit, he observes, Letter 2d, p. 36, that "Orthodox christians believe that He, like the Father and Son, is truly and essentially divine." And in Letter 3d, p. 30, he observes, "From the Scriptures then, we learn, and understand, that there is a Father, a Son, and a Holy Spirit: that the Father possesses divine attributes, and is therefore God; that the Son possesses divine attributes, and is therefore God; that the Holy Spirit also possesses divine attributes, and is therefore God; and that the divine Three so exist together, as to be one God."

These quotations exhibit, in a connected view, Dr. Worcester's theory of the doctrine of the Trinity. I know not that any passage in his Letters has been omitted, which would assist in forming a more correct and clear idea of it. The import of the quotations, as I understand them, is, that the *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are truly, essentially, equally divine persons, but so united, and so exist, as to constitute but one God.*

In relation to this doctrine, I shall make some inquiries and remarks. But before I do this, it may be proper to state what the Doctor says respecting the *union* of the divine Three. "The unity of the three divine Persons is the highest and most perfect possible: not merely a *moral union*, such as exists between holy men and angels, but an *essential oneness*, such as constitutes one Godhead. If all the knowledge, and wisdom, and power, and goodness of the Father are also in the Son and in the Holy Spirit; then in their nature, in their attributes, in their designs, in their works, in their blessedness, in their glory, they are one."

Is this view, my dear Sir, of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, *unquestionably* correct? You will not deem it as irreverent and presumptuous, if I make some queries, in reference to it, and suggest some difficulties existing in my own mind which operate as a hinderance to my receiving it as an unquestionable verity.

By persons, according to Dr. W. we are to understand "really and truly intelligent agents, each possessing all divine attributes, and performing in union with the other two all divine works." These agents are three *beings*. This

it is presumed the Dr. will not hesitate to admit, as he holds that the Saviour, (the Son of God,) is “a *being* essentially divine.” But must not three divine *beings* be three *Gods*? Let Dr. W. decide. “The Father possesses divine attributes, and is therefore God; the Son possesses divine attributes, and is therefore God; the Holy Spirit also possesses divine attributes, and is therefore God.”—According to the Dr.’s theory then, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are three *persons*—these persons are three *agents*—these agents are three *beings*, and these beings are three *Gods*. And yet these “divine Three so exist together as to be one God.” But “what is there,” asks the Dr. “in all this which, as matter of fact, we do not understand?”—Whether *you*, my dear Sir, understand *all this*, I will not presume to say. But there is much in it, I freely confess, which *I* do *not* understand. Although I will not decisively say, the supposition that three persons, or agents, or beings, or Gods, are one God, “is contrary to reason;” yet I dare not say that it is compatible with reason. Does reason teach or admit the existence of *three Gods* equal, and infinite in “divine attributes?” Should you revolt at this statement as polytheistic, and therefore as inadmissible, let me ask—does reason teach or admit the existence of *three beings* equal and infinite in divine attributes? Should you object to this statement, then, let the question be,—does reason teach or admit the existence of *three agents* or *persons* equal, and infinite in divine attributes? To this statement, I presume, you will not object. But what is the difference between three *Gods* or *beings* equal and infinite in divine attributes, and three *agents* or *persons* equal and infinite in divine attributes? Must not these attributes have a *subject* or *subjects* to which they belong? But must not the subject or subjects be *precisely the same*, whether they be called persons, agents, beings, or Gods? The application of different names to beings, or things, their attributes remaining the same, neither produces, nor is capable of producing any alteration or change in the beings or things themselves. Can you, Sir, perceive any other than a mere nominal difference between *three persons* possessed of infinite divine attributes, and *three Gods* possessed of the same attributes? If there be any perceptible difference, most devoutly do I wish that I had the ability to perceive it. It does, Sir, appear to me as disingenuous,—as trifling with a most serious subject, to attempt to make any *real* distinction between three infinite persons, and three infinite Gods. But is it to be admitted that there are three Gods possessing equal and infinite attributes? I do not see, I confess, why this should not be admitted, on the supposi-

tion of the existence of three persons possessing such attributes. Yet I am not prepared to admit the supposition "as matter of fact."—Nor, were this admitted, do I see how I can "understand" that three Gods, or beings, or agents, or persons, equal in divine and infinite attributes, either do, or can exist, as one God. I am, I assure you, completely confounded when I attempt to contemplate *three* such existences, each omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, &c. and each "willing, doing, and enjoying" what the others, will, do, and enjoy, and yet being but *one*.

"The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, (says the Doctor,) are either three divine persons, *united in one Godhead*, or else three *separate Divine Beings*. The former is the orthodox doctrine." But is it not difficult to conceive of, and contemplate three divine persons otherwise than so many *separate and distinct beings*? If we ascribe to each divine and equal attributes, is it not necessary to consider each as separate from the others? If "what the Father knows, the Son knows, and the Holy Spirit knows;"—if "what the Father wills, the Son wills, and the Holy Spirit wills;" if "what the Father does, the Son does, and the Holy Spirit does;" and if "what the Father enjoys, the Son enjoys, and the Holy Spirit enjoys," is not the knowledge, the will, the actions, and the enjoyments of each, his *own* knowledge, will, actions and enjoyments? Must we not then contemplate each as *separate* from the others? To me, Sir, it is extremely difficult, to say the least, to conceive of a person who knows, and wills, and acts, and enjoys, and yet is not a separate and distinct person or being from all other persons. The idea that three persons, each possessed of "divine attributes," have, or can have a community of one and the same perception and will, of the same individual act, and enjoyment; or that these things are common to the three, is too mysterious for my apprehension. Is not the supposition unintelligible? Is it not as *contrary* to, as it is *above reason*?

But let us see again what the Doctor says respecting the subject. "It appears that the unity of the three Divine Persons is the highest and most perfect possible, not merely a *moral union*, such as exists between holy men and angels, but an *essential oneness*, such as constitutes one Godhead." This unity, then, is *moral*, although not simply or wholly so. It is "such as exists between holy men and angels." But what is the unity which exists between these holy beings, but that of *concord*, or an *agreement in affection, design and pursuit*? This unity, however "high and perfect," is so far from constituting them one individual being, that it has no tendency to such an effect. As the unity then of the three Divine Persons is the same in *kind* with that which exists

between "holy men and angels," it neither does, nor can, it appears to me, constitute them one God. Is it not indeed wholly incompatible with such a supposition? But the Dr. adds that this unity consists in, "an essential oneness, such as constitutes one Godhead," or "one God."—*Essential oneness*—What are we to understand by this? That the three persons have between them one, and but one individual consciousness, understanding, will, &c. But can such a oneness be consistent with a *moral unity*, such as exists between holy men and angels? Can there be any concord, or agreement in affection, design, and pursuit between them, if they are so united as to be but one individual God? Can a *moral union* exist between the one God! The Dr. has indeed attempted an explication of the *essential oneness* of the three divine persons. He supposes that "all the knowledge, and wisdom, and power, and goodness of the Father are also in the Son and in the Holy Spirit;" and that all these perfections which are both "in the Father and in the Son, are also in the Holy Spirit."—This representation is to my mind not a little ambiguous. If we are to understand by it that the Father possesses individual, separate, or distinct knowledge, wisdom, power and goodness, and yet that these very attributes or properties are in the Son, I would ask—can they be *in*, and *belong* to the Father and the Son at the same time? Is it not very difficult to conceive that the property of *one person or being* should be the property, and in the possession, at the same time, of *another person or being*? If the knowledge, wisdom, &c. of the Father be in the Son, must not these attributes be *exclusively* the Son's? And if the knowledge, wisdom, &c. which are in the Father and in the Son, are also in the Holy Spirit, must they not be the *exclusive* attributes of the Spirit? If all divine attributes exist in the Holy Spirit, and these attributes properly belong to the Spirit, as a person, I do not see that they either are, or can be the attributes, either of the Son or the Father. But if Doctor W. will not allow this to be a just representation of the "essential oneness of the three Divine Persons," I would ask whether he is to be understood as conveying the idea, that each is a sharer—an equal sharer of one common stock of knowledge, wisdom, power and goodness, and in such a mysterious manner, that *each* may be considered as possessing and using *the whole*? Whether this explication of the *essential oneness* under consideration meets the Doctor's views, I am not prepared to say. I can only say that it appears to me the most rational and consistent that can be given. Yet it is attended with difficulties, to my mind, which, if not invincible, are so great that I see not how they are satisfactorily to be removed.

But apprehensive that I may not have elucidated the Doctor's meaning, I will make, at present, no further inquiries respecting it, but examine the *proof* of his theory according to his own statement and explanation of it.—“The one Jehovah exists in a Trinity, called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These we call *persons*.” These persons “are really and truly *intelligent agents*, each possessing all divine attributes, and performing in union with the other two, all divine works.” These “intelligent agents,” are *beings*; and each of these beings, “is *God*.”

THE PROOF

Of this triune doctrine, as exhibited by Doctor Worcester, is now to be examined. In support of it, he observes, Letter 2. p. 30, “On the authority of the scriptures, orthodox christians believe that the one Jehovah exists in a Trinity, called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These we call *persons*; because THEY apply to each other the personal pronouns, *I*, *Thou*, and *He*, and to themselves together, the plurals *we*, *us*, and *our*.”—If this application of the personal pronouns to each other by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, were to be admitted as a matter of fact, I do not see that it would prove that the “One Jehovah exists in a Trinity.” But is it a fact that the application of the personal pronouns is *ever* made according to Dr. W.’s statement? Do either of the persons ever apply the personal pronoun *I*, to the other persons? Does either the Father or the Son apply the pronoun *Thou* to the Spirit? Or does the Spirit apply either of the pronouns to the Father, or the Son, or to himself? Does the Son ever apply the plurals *we*, *us*, *our*, to himself, to the Father, and to the Spirit *connectedly*? Or does the Spirit ever, in like manner, make the application? And is it not very doubtful, to say the least, whether the Father ever applies the plural pronouns to himself, his Son and his Spirit, collectively considered? The Doctor’s statement being thus essentially incorrect, no argument can be drawn from it in favor of his hypothesis.

“We believe,” continues the Doctor, “this doctrine, because we find it in those scriptures, which we receive as given by divine inspiration. In the scriptures the original Hebrew name, by which the Supreme Being is most commonly called, is *plural* (*Aleim*, Gods.”) But does the circumstance, that the word *Aleim*, or *Elohim*, is plural in its termination, prove that it has a plural import? If so, it proves only that there are *more Gods than one*; but without determining *the precise number*. But are we to admit the existence of a plurality of Gods—*supreme Gods*? This I

dare not. But if *Aleim* has a plural signification, and ought to be rendered Gods, instead of God, or Jehovah, is not the doctrine of polytheism to be admitted as a Bible truth ! From this single consideration I am inclined to believe that the word in question, is, in its import, with application to God, *strictly singular*. Besides, is not this word in the *Septuagint* always translated by the word *Theos*, in the singular number ? But did not the translators, who were native Hebrews, and perfectly understood their own language, consider the word *Aleim* to be singular in its import ? And does not this circumstance afford the strongest evidence that it is *not* plural in its sense and meaning ? I would further ask—Is it not very strange that if the word *Aleim* import plurality of persons, that the word corresponding to it in the *New Testament* should *always* be singular, and especially as the doctrine of the Trinity is thought to be revealed *here* much more clearly than in the Old Testament scriptures ? Did our Saviour give the least intimation when he quoted Deut. vi. 4. “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord,” that the word under consideration signified plurality of persons in the one God ? Rather did he not seem clearly to convey the idea that God is but *one* person ? I would further ask—Is not this same word, and other Hebrew words of plural termination, used to designate a false divinity and one numerical man ? As you will not question that this is indeed the case, ought you not to consider this circumstance as affording very strong and presumptive proof, that the word *Aleim*, the original name by which the Supreme Being is called, does not express plurality of persons ?

“In coincidence with this plural name, other plural words, (the Doctor observes,) are used. ‘Let us make man in our own image,’ &c. “This remarkable use of plurals which runs through the Hebrew scriptures,” he thinks, “clearly denotes a plurality of persons.” But if the use of the *plural pronoun*, in speaking of God, denotes *plurality of persons* in God, ought it not to be admitted that a similar use of a *singular pronoun*, denotes that God is but *one person* ? The fact however is, that “this remarkable use of plurals, which runs through the Hebrew scriptures,” but *very seldom* occurs. The singular pronoun, *I, Me ; Thou, Thee ; He, Him*, is *almost invariably* used in speaking of God. But does not this circumstance furnish very strong evidence that God is one person only ? Do not princes and men of distinction, when speaking of themselves *individually*, very frequently use the plural pronoun *We, Our, Us* ? And is not Dr. W. himself in the habit of thus using it ? We have indeed a very considerable number of examples of this kind in the scriptures. When Rehoboam took

counsel with the young men that were brought up with him, about a grievance and request of his subjects, he uses with respect to himself, the plural pronoun. "What counsel give ye, that *we* may answer this people?" And St. Paul, you must be sensible, in speaking of himself, very frequently uses the plural pronoun *we, our, us*. But are we hence to infer that in Rehoboam, and St. Paul, there was a Trinity of persons? Is it safe—is it justifiable then to infer the existence of a Trinity of persons in God, because in speaking of himself, he uses a *very few times*, the same plural pronoun? Since this majestic expression is so common among men, considered as individuals, is it to be wondered at that the *Great Supreme* should sometimes employ it? Is it not rather a subject of wonder that the examples are *so few*? Is it not pertinent also to remark, that in most, if not in all languages, there are words of plural termination which have a singular meaning? Besides, it is not only an idiom of the Hebrew language, but perfectly agreeable to its *syntax*, that "words which express *majesty*, &c. are often put in the plural." On supposition, then, that God is but one person, it cannot be considered an impropriety that, in speaking of himself, he should use the plural pronoun, *We, Our, Us*. But on supposition that he is three persons, agents, or beings, would it not be contrary to the established usages of all speech, were he to employ the singular pronoun *I, My, Me*? Although a single person, in speaking of himself, often employs this plural pronoun, it is never the case that several persons, in speaking of themselves, employ it in the singular. These things considered, I cannot but strongly apprehend, to say the least, that Dr. W.'s proof of a plurality of persons in God from this *remarkable* use of plurals is essentially defective.

As a further proof that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, "exist as one God," Dr. W. observes, Letter 3, p. 24, that "the scriptures do abundantly ascribe to each of the adorable Three, the same divine names, attributes, works, and honours." This positive, and confident, and unqualified assertion, has frequently been made by advocates for the Trinitarian theory. And to this, it is not unlikely, that the unshaken belief of many serious christians in that theory, is in a great measure to be traced. Nor, admitting the truth of the assertion, is it a matter of wonder, that the doctrine should, by so many, be embraced. Yet it may be a question, whether, if the assertion were strictly true, it would not rather support polytheism, than the doctrine of the Trinity. But is the assertion, my dear Sir, to be admitted as true? Although I will not positively say, in contradiction to Dr. W. and others, that it is not

true, yet I must be permitted to say, that I cannot find evidence that it is true. But on the supposition that the scriptures do ascribe to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, "the same divine names, attributes, works, and honors," may it not, nevertheless, be a question, whether the scriptures *so* ascribe them to the "adorable Three," as to prove, either that they are three persons equally divine, or that they exist as *one* God? what the proper answer to this question should be, may more satisfactorily appear in another place. I will only add here, that I think Dr. W. has expressed his belief, in relation to the subject, in too strong, decisive and unguarded a manner.

Page 25, of his Third Letter, Dr. Worcester observes, "that in the institution, by which we are initiated into the christian community, a solemn act of worship is prescribed to be done to the Holy Spirit, in union with the other Divine Persons. The high command is, 'Go, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the NAME of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY SPIRIT.' Shall man then dare to 'put asunder, what God has joined together,' in the very *name and nature of God*!"—On this text, as proof of his theory, the Doctor seems, with much confidence, to rely. But whether it affords sufficient ground for this, I would query.—Because *three* are here mentioned, is it necessary to infer, either that they are three divine and equal persons, or agents, or beings, or Gods? In commissioning his apostles, one of the Three, (the Son,) says, "All power is *given* unto me in heaven and in earth." But does not this seem very strongly to imply that the Son is dependent on, and inferior to the Father, who *gave* him the power? Is it not "more blessed to *give* than to *receive*?" And is it not a truth, "and without all contradiction, that the *less* is blessed of the *better*?" God the Father, *of* whom, and *through* whom, and *to* whom are all things, *gives* to all liberally, but *receives* from none. I would query further—whether the form of the rite of baptism is to be considered as *strictly* implying an act of *religious worship*? The words of the institution do not seem to imply any *address* either to the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit. What then is there in the words, or in the *use* of the words, in relation to baptism, of the nature of worship? But will the circumstance that the names of the *Three* are *joined together*, be urged as proof that they are *equal persons*, or, that they are *one God*? This, I think, cannot be urged with much force. It is not uncommon with the sacred writers to mention *God* and the *creature* together, and in as solemn a manner, as the *Three* are mentioned in the text under consideration. One or two instances will suffice as a specimen. "And all the con-

gregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers, *and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the LORD, and the king.*" "I charge thee before God, and the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and the *elect angels*, that thou observe these things," &c. Is king David, or are the elect angels, to be considered as equal to, or one with God, because they are mentioned in so intimate and solemn connexion with him? or is it to be supposed that there was no difference in the worship paid by the Israelites to their God, and their temporal king? But will it be urged, that baptizing in the *name* of a person, furnishes clear proof of the divinity of that person? If this be admitted, will not the proof go too far? How many were baptized unto *Moses*, and unto *John*? But to be baptized *unto* Moses and John may be, and probably is equivalent to being baptized *in the name* of Moses and John. Yet neither the baptist, nor Moses, was a divine person. Besides, if baptizing in the name of a person imply the divinity of that person, can it reasonably be supposed that the apostle Paul would have asked the Corinthian christians, whether they had been baptized in *his name*? Farther—It seems to be worthy of particular remark, that the form of baptism under review was never used, so far as we know, in the apostolic age. By the sacred records we are assured that converts to christianity were baptized in the name of *Christ*, or in the name of the *Lord Jesus*. But they make no mention of baptism, having been performed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Is it not then highly probable that baptism, whether it be received in the form of words prescribed by Christ, or in his name only, is to be considered as an expression of a firm belief in, and acknowledgment of the truth of christianity, which, by the appointment and direction of *the Father*, was promulgated by *Jesus Christ*, and confirmed by *the Holy Spirit*? Baptism may also express dedication to God, and obligation on the part of the persons dedicated, to observe and do whatever God has revealed by his Son, the truth of which he has established, by the stupendous signs and wonders performed by his Spirit. Whether any thing, and if any thing, what, and how much more is implied in christian baptism, I pretend not to decide.

The happiness which results from *society* among equals, is a consideration which Dr. Worcester thinks, affords proof that God exists as a Trinity of persons. Agreeably he observes, Letter 3d, p. 34, "In the most Holy Three in One, we see what can never be seen in a single Divine Person: we see a *society*, infinitely perfect and blessed. When we turn our thoughts from a Trinity to one Divine Person, inhabiting eternity, in solitary existence, we find

it impossible to conceive how he can be happy. If he existed in one solitary person, where could he find an adequate object of infinite love, and how could he be infinitely happy? when we contemplate a Trinity, a far different view is presented to our minds. GOD IS LOVE. The Three adorable Persons, unlimited in all perfections and excellencies, inhabit eternity together; dwell everlastingly in each other, in mutual, perfect, unmeasurable love."—"This is a theme on which my mind delights to dwell; and which I cannot exchange for the solitary Deity, and the philosophical heaven of Unitarians."

What, my dear Sir, am I to think—what shall I say of this representation of the "Holy Three in One!" Am I to think that one divine person, or being, "unlimited in all perfections and excellencies," cannot *possibly* "*be happy*,"—that *He* cannot "*find an adequate object of infinite love*,"—and that *we* cannot find an object in one "solitary Deity" on which the pious mind can "*delight to dwell*!" In stating, and in the contemplation of these queries, I cannot but realize confused, strange, and painful emotions. If one person, of all, and unlimited perfections, cannot be happy, but in society; and if to be associated with one other such person, were not sufficient to make him happy, is it not difficult to conceive that an association with two other such persons, would be competent to his complete happiness? Why would not the happiness of the *individual* be increased in proportion to the increase of *the number of persons associated*? Besides, if one person of all infinite perfections, cannot, in those perfections, find an adequate object of *infinite love*,—and if in two such persons he cannot find this object, is it not difficult to conceive that this adequate object can be found in three such persons? Would not this object increase in excellence, in proportion to the increase of such supposed persons! These questions, I am sensible, seem to border on an irreverent treatment of a most serious and solemn subject. But they are questions which Dr. W's. statements strongly suggested to my mind, and which, I think, naturally grow out of his statements. In proposing them, however, I feel no emotion of levity, or of irreverence. The very reverse is the case.—I am filled with commiseration, mingled with astonishment.

Pages 27, 28, Letter 3d, Dr. Worcester speaks of "the many thousands of holy men in the orthodox church of Christ, who, from the days of the apostles, to the present, have worshipped the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit," and as having been "valiant for the truth," &c. Although in this passage he does not expressly say, that christians, generally, in the first and purest ages of chris-

trianity, worshipped the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as three *equal persons* in one God, yet I think there can be no doubt that he means to convey this idea; as otherwise they could not, in his view, have been "valiant for the truth." And that he considers this supposed fact as a circumstantial evidence in favor of the *triune doctrine*, is not to be questioned. Nor is the fact, if satisfactorily supported, to be considered as a weak argument for the truth of the doctrine. But has the Dr. supported the supposed fact? I think not. His quotations from the "primitive Fathers," in support of the doctrine, p. 29, do not, to my mind, afford satisfactory proof, that the orthodox doctrine of the primitive church was trinitarian. They admit of a fair construction, I conceive, which would by no means support, or even favor Dr. W.'s hypothesis of the Trinity. That primitive christians generally considered both the Son and the Spirit of God as divine in a *qualified sense*, and worshipped them as such, is perhaps to be admitted. But that they believed the Son and Spirit to be consubstantial and co-equal with the Father, and worshipped them in this character, I am not prepared to admit, as I do not find sufficient evidence of it.

The doctrine of the trinity, if at all, but very little arrested the attention and employed the pens of the earliest Fathers in the christian church. They but incidentally touched upon the subject; and when they did this, they expressed themselves in a loose, if not inconsistent manner. Nor did the doctrine appear in any regular form before the council of Nice, towards the close of the *fourth* century. But the doctrine as contained in the creed of that council is inconsistent with the idea that Christ was *without origin*, or *God of himself*. In this creed Christ is represented as *derived* from his Father, and, of course, as not properly *equal* to his Father. It was not till after that council that the "divinity of Christ was carried to a supreme height." But whether the Nicene Fathers are to be considered as having been, in a *qualified* sense, Trinitarians, I will not decide. Nor will I peremptorily say that the earlier Fathers were not so. But if they were, even in the most lax sense of the word, I know not how to account for it that they should express their opinions in the following manner—"Jesus Christ is the servant, the Son of God. He is Lord of the people, having received all power from the Father." "Be ye imitators of Christ, as he is of the Father." "He never did any thing, but what that God, who made all things, and above whom there is no God, willed that he should do, or say. He is subservient to his Father's will, and only called God by way of figure." "The Father only is the Good; and the Saviour, as he is the image of the

invisible God, so he is the image of his goodness." "The Saviour and the Holy Spirit are more excelled by the Father, than he, and the Holy Spirit excel other things." "We must not pray to any created being; not to Christ himself, but only to God the Father of all, to whom our Saviour himself prayed." "The Son is less than the Father, because he is sanctified by him." "God the Father is Maker and Creator of all, who *alone* has no origin, invisible, immense, immortal, eternal, the one God, to whose greatness, majesty, and power, nothing can be preferred, or compared." "If Christ had been uncreated, and likewise unbegotten, there would have been two unbegotten, and therefore two Gods. The Son does nothing of his own pleasure, nor does he come of himself; but in all things obeys his Father's commands. He approved his fidelity to God; for he taught that there is one God, and that he only ought to be worshipped; nor did he ever say that he was God. For he would not have preserved his allegiance, if, being sent to take away a multiplicity of Gods, and to preach *one God*, he had brought in another, besides that one." "Christ, being neither the Supreme God, nor an angel, is of a middle nature between them, the only begotten Son of God." "It is allowed, that as in the great multitude of believers, who admit of difference in opinion, there are some who say that the Saviour is God over all; but we do not say so, who believe him when he said, *my Father is greater than I.*"

These quotations, my dear Sir, are made from the primitive Fathers of the christian church who were its brightest ornaments; and from whose writings modern Trinitarians endeavor to support the doctrine of the Trinity.—Now, in the view of these, and many more similar passages, which occur in the writings of these Fathers, I cannot, to say the least, but very strongly doubt their belief in the Trinitarian doctrine. Although some passages occur in their writings which, separately considered, seem to countenance this doctrine; yet so many, and so unambiguous are the passages to be found in them in opposition to it, that I see not how it can reasonably be supposed that either they, or private christians generally, were believers in the supreme divinity of Christ, or the doctrine of the Trinity.

As we find but little said by the primitive Fathers respecting the character of the Holy Spirit, and that little not favorable to the idea that he is a person co-equal with the Father, there is much reason to suppose that they did not believe that this was the case.

These things considered, do we not find very considerable evidence, at least, that the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is held by Dr. W. and others, was neither taught nor be-

lieved by the apostles of our Lord ? For had they believed and taught this doctrine, would not the primitive Fathers have known it, as some of them were contemporary with the apostle John ? But had they learnt this doctrine from that inspired apostle, would they not, in the most explicit and earnest manner, have taught and inculcated it ? The subject has certainly a strong claim to our serious and candid consideration and research. If it be true, as Dr. W. seems to suppose, that holy men, generally, in the earliest ages of the church, worshipped the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as co-equal persons in one God, it is to be regretted that he has not produced more satisfactory evidence in support of the supposed truth.— With respect to after ages, down to the *reformation* by Luther, Calvin, and others, the Trinitarian belief and worship appear, generally, to have prevailed in the christian church. But these were eminently the “times of darkness.” There were, however, during the lapse of that long and dark night, dissenters to be found from what was deemed the orthodox faith and worship. Their number, at times, was very considerable, particularly from about the middle of the twelfth century to the time of the reformation, a period of more than 300 years. These dissenters were called Waldenses and by other significant and appropriate names. They were considered, generally, as “holy men.” In “morals and life they were good ; true in words, and unanimous in brotherly love ; blameless and without reproach among men, and obeying the divine commands with all their might.” Their faith was simple. They professed to “believe in and to worship *one God, through the one Mediator, and by the influence of the Holy Spirit.*” And the probability is that but few, if any of them, were believers in, or worshippers of a triune God. Even Trinitarian writers of ecclesiastical history admit that some of them “were Arians, Unitarians, &c.” The truth seems to be that no uniform system of doctrines was common to them all ; but that diversity, in both religious opinion and modes of worship, existed among them. I am, however, far from being satisfied that *any* of them held Dr. W.’s theory of the Trinity. But these “holy men,” are considered by Protestant writers, generally, as having constituted *the true church of Christ*, during the dark period in which they existed. I cannot but think, therefore, that the Dr. has expressed his belief in relation to the worship of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, particularly in the primitive ages of the church, in a very unguarded and unjustifiable manner. Although I will not positively say his belief is unfounded, yet I do think that

he has been very far from producing conclusive or even forcible evidence that it is not. I think also that the Dr's. assertion, p. 69, is not sufficiently supported. He says, "It is a well attested fact, that by the great body of christians, from the days of the apostles to the present, the deniers of the Trinity, &c. have been regarded as being eminently subverters of the gospel."—If the fact be indeed "well attested," although it is not to be admitted as decisive evidence in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, yet it may reasonably be considered as a witness in its favour. But this supposed fact is not, I conceive, so well attested as to claim belief. The fact, probably, is, that but few, if any christians in the first and purest ages of christianity, were Trinitarians, in Dr. W.'s sense of the word, whatever might have been the case during the 1000 years' reign of darkness which succeeded those evangelical ages. But however this may have been, the truth or falsehood of the Trinitarian theory is to be tested by a more sure rule than that of general opinion, *the word of prophecy*. To this it "becomes us to take more diligent heed."

I now pass to an examination of what Dr. Worcester says respecting the person or character

OF GOD THE FATHER.

On this great and all important subject, he says but little distinctly. It is to be inferred, however, from many passages in his letters, that, although he *professedly* admits the existence of but one supreme God, he does not believe that this God is the Father, or that the Father is the Supreme God. Nor does this article of his belief appear merely from inference. He expressly avows it. "The Father," he says, Letter third, page 25, "does not exist 'alone,' nor is he *alone* the Supreme God." But yet, page 29, he admits that the Father "possesses all divine attributes," and is truly an "intelligent agent." He admits also, that the Father is "God."—Now, my dear Sir, let me ask—Is it indeed true that the Father is an intelligent Agent, and God, possessed of *all* divine attributes, and yet is not *alone* the Supreme God? Does any thing *more than all divine attributes exist in the Supreme God*? But this is not the God whom Dr. Worcester and others worship. "We worship," he says, Letter 2, page 26, addressing Mr. Channing, "THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST. Do you worship this same God?" Again, Letter 1, page 28, "The God whom you worship is different from ours."—Although I would indulge the hope that the difference between the object of Trinitarian, and the object of Unitarian worship, is rather *seeming* than

real, yet I know not that I have sufficient ground to say that the difference is *not real*, and as great as the Dr. seems to suppose. It is a fact, however, that he, and others in sentiment with him, profess to believe in one Supreme God as the only adequate object of supreme worship. But do not Unitarians profess the same belief? And do not both these denominations professedly worship this same God? So far as I know, Unitarian christians of all descriptions avow their belief in the existence of one Supreme God possessed of all divine attributes. And this one God they professedly worship. But do Trinitarians profess to believe in and to worship more Supreme Gods than one? However ambiguously they may express their sentiments on this subject, they will not admit, I presume, that they have more than one Supreme God as the object of their worship. But is this their one Supreme God, or object of worship, possessed of more than one class or set of "all divine perfections?" If not, how does he differ from the Unitarian God? Most earnestly do I wish for a clear and satisfactory answer to these questions. A fair and candid answer to them might go far towards a mutual understanding of each other, between Trinitarian and Unitarian christians, and towards a christian union and intercourse between them. Nor is it impossible that a proper answer to the questions, would go far towards convincing Trinitarians, that the Father "alone" is the Supreme God. But however this might be, it is certainly a question of no common importance, whether the Scriptures teach this doctrine. If they indeed do, the doctrine is worthy of all acceptance. Nor can we reject it and be guiltless. What then say the Scriptures in respect to it?—Unto us *there is but one God, the Father*, of whom are all things. 1 Cor. viii. 6. *One God and Father* of all, who is *above all*, and through all, and in you all. Eph. iv. 6. What, my dear Sir, is the most obvious import or meaning of these passages with respect to God the Father? Is it not that HE "*alone*" is the Supreme God? As there is but *one God*, as this one God is *the Father*, and as all things are *of the Father*, who is of course *above all*, does not the inference seem necessary that he alone is *the Supreme God*?

Do not the Scriptures *limit the knowledge of some future events to the Father*? "Of that day and hour," says Christ, "knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Matt. xxiv. 36. The parallel text in Mark has the addition of the Son—"neither the Son, but the Father." This express declaration was made by the faithful and true Witness. He observes also, Acts i. 7, addressing his apostles, "It is not

for you to know the times, or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." Whether by *that day* we are to understand the destruction of Jerusalem, or the day of judgment, is a matter of but little consequence. The important inquiry is, whether any person or being, aside from the Father, knew, previously to its taking place, the precise time when the event would happen. If no man knew this, or no *one*—not the *angels* of heaven, nor even *the Son* of God himself, but the *Father only*, or *alone*, must not the *Father alone* be the Supreme God? Can any person or being be the Supreme God who does not know, and foreknow *all* future events,—*all* future "times and seasons?" But as the Father hath put these in his *own power*, I cannot but apprehend that the assertion, "the Father *alone* is *not* the Supreme God," was made by Dr. W. without a due consideration of the subject.

Through the whole of the New-Testament scriptures we are expressly taught that the Father is both *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. Christ also expressly acknowledges him as *his* God and Father. As the correctness of this statement will not be questioned, it were needless to refer to particular passages. But does not this title seem clearly to indicate the superiority, and the exclusive supremacy of the Father? Is it not difficult to conceive that Jesus Christ should have a *God over him*, and yet that *he himself* should be *the Supreme God*, or *equal* to the Supreme God? Or that God should be *his Father*, and yet that *he himself* should be *self-existent*, and *independent*? It may be said, I am sensible, and Dr. Worcester does not hesitate to say it, Letter 3d, p. 17, that "there is no absurdity in saying that Jesus Christ is both the Son of God, and himself God," "possessed of all divine perfections." But if to say this implies no absurdity, it must imply a *difficulty*, which does not easily admit of a satisfactory solution. Nor do I see how it can be reconciled with the declaration that "there is one God and Father of all, who is above all," or with what Christ himself has said in relation to the subject—"This is life eternal, that they might know *THEE the ONLY TRUE GOD*, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

The scriptures not only teach that "the Father" is the "*One God*," but the "*only wise God*" to whom "glory through Jesus Christ" is to be ascribed;—that he is the "*only true God*," as *distinguished from Jesus Christ*; that he "*only is holy*"—that he is the "*only Potentate*"—that he "*only hath immortality*." Such are the express declarations of scripture. But if the *Father* is the *only wise, true and holy God*—if he is the *only Potentate*—if he *only hath immortality*, must not he "*alone*" be the Supreme

God? Can these declarations be so construed as fairly to admit the supposition that his glory is *not unrivalled*?

The Scriptures teach us that the Father is possessed of wisdom in the highest sense. "To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ, forever." Rom. xvi. 27. But does not the term *only* in this passage seem evidently to exclude from Supreme Divinity all other persons or beings, even Jesus Christ himself? If glory is to be given *through Jesus Christ* to the *Father* as the *only wise God*, must not the Father *alone* be the *Supreme God*?

Do not the scriptures teach us that *the Father alone is Almighty*? The word *Almighty* very frequently occurs in the Old Testament, and is applied to *the Father*, as his *appropriate character*. It occurs also several times in the New Testament, and is applied, there is much reason to believe, *exclusively* to the Father. - "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty." Rev. xi. 17. "And he (Christ) treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of *Almighty God*." Rev. xix. 15. "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the *Lord God Omnipotent* reigneth. Let us rejoice and be glad, and give honor unto *him*, for the marriage of the Lamb is come." Rev. xix. 6, 7. "And I saw no temple therein; (the holy city, the new Jerusalem) for *the Lord God Almighty*, and the Lamb are the temple of it." Rev. xxi. 22. Is *Lamb of God* a title expressive of *omnipotence*? Does it convey the idea that he is "himself God?" Is the honor given to the Lord God Omnipotent, *on account of the marriage of the Lamb*, consistent with the supposition, that the Lamb is possessed of all "divine attributes," and the object of supreme worship? Or is his treading the wine-press of *Almighty God*, reconcilable with the hypothesis that *he is himself* the Almighty? As we are assured, 1 Tim. vi. 15, that the Father is the "*only Potentate*," I am afraid to say or think that he *alone* is not the Supreme God.

Do not the scriptures teach us that God *the Father* is the great original or Creator of all things? "*Thou art the God, even thou alone*, of all the kingdoms of the earth; *thou* hast made heaven and earth." 2 Kings, xix. 15. "In six days *the Lord* made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is." Ex. xx. 11. *Thou* art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for *thou* hast created all things; and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Rev. iv. 11. Many other passages ascribe the work of creation to God the Father as the *Great and Original Efficient*. In whatever sense the work of creation is to be ascribed to Jesus Christ, yet may we not reasonably

conclude, that it is not to be ascribed to him as the first, or original cause? For “to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things”—“by whom he made the worlds”—“by whom, and for whom all things were created.” If all things are *of* the one God, even the Father, and only *by* or *through* Jesus Christ;—if the *Father made the worlds*, although it were by the instrumentality of Jesus Christ; and although he thus made them *for* Jesus Christ—to be in *subjection* to him, must not the work of creation be ascribed to the Father as the Prime or Original Agent? In this sense are we not to consider him as having “stretched out the heavens *alone*,” and as having “spread abroad the earth *by himself*?” In this sense God the Father appears to have been considered as the Creator of the universe by christians generally, if not universally in the first and purest ages of the church. If this were not the case, how is it to be accounted for that the work of creation is ascribed exclusively to “God the Father Almighty,” in the apostles’ creed, which, of all others, in the christian church, is the most ancient, and which was considered by the “great body of pious and godly christians” as strictly orthodox? But does not this creed in the most decisive manner ascribe the work of creation *exclusively* to the *Father* as the *First Cause*, or *Great Efficient*? Do we not find also the work of creation thus exclusively ascribed to the Father in the Nicene creed, which was signed towards the close of the fourth century by no less than three hundred and fourteen bishops, and which was generally received as orthodox by the christian church? However ambiguous and exceptionable this creed may be in several of its expressions, yet it seems very clearly to ascribe the work of creation to the Father as the Great Supreme. “I believe,” is the language of the creed, “in one God, *the Father, Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible*; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only *begotten Son* of God,” &c. The members of the council who composed and adopted this creed appear to have believed that whatever of divinity Jesus Christ possessed, was *derived* from the Father, and that he was not *without origin*, or *of himself*, as the Father was. The equality of Christ to the Father, or his supreme and independent divinity, is language which we shall not find, I believe, or any thing equivalent to it, till a later and more corrupt period of the church.

Do not the scriptures teach us that the *Father alone is the living God*? Jesus Christ instructed his disciples to consider the Father as “*the living Father*,” and that he

himself "lived by the Father." Agreeably Peter, speaking of his own, and of the faith of the other disciples, earnestly says, "We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of *the living God*." John vi. 69. Paul and Barnabas urge the inhabitants of Lystra "to turn from their vanities to *the living God*," Acts xiv. 15. The high priest adjures Christ by "*the living God*;" which shews that this title or character, with application to the Father, was well known and in frequent use. In a very considerable number of places in scripture it is applied to the Father, but *never* to Jesus Christ. Now as the title, "*the living God*," is thus appropriate and discriminating; and as the life of which Christ is possessed is, by his own declaration, *the gift* of his Father, I cannot but think the assertion that "the Father alone is not the Supreme God," indicative of too much confidence, and the want of due attention to the great and solemn subject.

Do not the scriptures teach us that *the Father alone is holy and good, and true in the highest sense*? The song of Moses and the Lamb is thus sung by heavenly inhabitants, "Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, O King of saints. Who would not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name, for *thou only art holy*?" Rev. xv. 3, 4. "And behold one came and said unto him, (Christ) good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, why callest thou me good? there is *none good but one, that is God*," Matt. xix. 16, 17. "This is life eternal, that they might know *thee the only true God*, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent," John xvii. 3. If, my dear Sir, the Father *only* is *holy*—if he *only* is *good*—and if he *only* is the *true God*, does it not seem that He '*alone*' is the Supreme God? In the passage quoted from the Revelation, Jesus Christ is styled the *Lamb*. And the Lamb seems to be represented as uniting with the holy inhabitants of heaven in ascription of praise to his Father, the *only holy One*. As the song which they sing is the *Lamb's* song, it seems that it is sung as well by him, as by those who had "gotten the victory over the beast." In the other passages Christ has taught us that his Father only is good and true in *distinction from himself*. Is it not too much, and too adventurous then to say that the Father *alone* is *not* the Supreme God?

Do not the scriptures teach us, that *the Father alone is the Most High—the Highest*? The angel in his message to Mary says, "Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and called the Son of *the Highest*. The power of *the Highest* shall overshadow thee; therefore

also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God ;” “the prophet of *the Highest*,” Luke i. 31, 35, 76. “The *Most High* dwelleth not in temples made with hands.” “These men are the servants of the *Most High God*,” Acts vii. 48, and xvi. 17. This title frequently occurs in the Old Testament scriptures as the *appropriate title of God the Father*. Thus the writers of the New Testament seem to have understood it. Agreeably they apply it *exclusively* to the Father, even the God and Father of Jesus Christ. Now, as the Father *alone* is *the Highest—the Most High God*; and Jesus Christ “*the Son of the Highest*,” does not the inference seem natural, if not necessary, that “the Father *alone*” is the Supreme God ?

Do not the scriptures also teach us, that the Father is “*above all*,”—“*far above all Gods*”—that “among the gods there is *none like unto him*”—that in an appropriate sense he is that “King eternal,” “who *is*, who *was*, and who is to *come* ?” But do not these descriptions of God the Father seem strongly to indicate that He *alone* is the Supreme God ?

I have now, my dear Sir, presented to your view a very considerable number and variety of names or titles of God, the Father, which I believe I may venture to say are applied to HIM ALONE, and *never applied to Jesus Christ*. Whether they will produce conviction in your mind, that the Father alone is the Supreme God, I presume not to say. Nor will I say that they demonstrate the supremacy of the Father. Yet may I not be permitted to ask, whether they do not amount to *very strong evidence* in proof that this is indeed the case ? By what warrant, or by what authority then has Dr. W. said that “the plain humble christian finds in the Bible all divine attributes, works and honors ascribed to the Son, his adored Redeemer and Saviour,” as “are ascribed to the Father ?” Letter 3. p. 31. I cannot but think, Sir, that had the Doctor paid all that attention to the subject, which its vast importance demands, he would not have made the assertion in so confident and decisive a manner. When I consider his distinguished talents, and the great influence he has on the minds and faith of a large portion of the christian community, I cannot but feel and express very deep regret, mingled with surprise, at his making an assertion in respect to a most solemn and interesting subject, with so little apparent ground for its support. Most devoutly do I hope that he will very seriously review the subject, and that his readers will not admit his assertion as true, until they shall find it to be so, from a careful examination of the scriptures for themselves.

From Dr. Worcester's speculation of the character of the Father, let us now pass to an examination of his ideas respecting the

CHARACTER OF THE SON.

We have already seen that the Doctor believes that Christ, the Son of God, is "a Divine Person"—"really and truly an intelligent agent, possessing all divine attributes"—a "being essentially divine," and "is therefore God." Here, Sir, you will permit me to ask, whether, admitting these statements, as correct, Jesus Christ must not *alone* be the Supreme God? Is not the *Supreme God* a *divine person*—an *intelligent agent, being or God*, possessing *all divine attributes*? But what *more* than these can he possess? Were I to suppose, with Dr. W. that Christ is "truly God"—"the true God"—"God himself"—"God over all," and "essentially equal to the Father," must I not admit, either that *Jesus Christ is alone the Supreme God*? or that *he and his Father are two Supreme Gods*? I see not how this is to be avoided. But this is not the only difficulty which the Doctor's opinion of Christ presents to my view. He supposes, Letter 2. p. 7, "Jesus Christ to be God and man united in one person." But can this supposition be admitted as true, consistently with the idea that the *Father is equal to the Son*? If the Father possesses all divine attributes, and *these only*, how can he be equal to the Son, who not only possesses, *all divine attributes*," but also *all the attributes belonging to a man*, and a man too unspeakably superior to any other man? Whether this supposition is merely gratuitous, I shall not particularly inquire in this place. My first inquiry will be, whether he has supported his position that *Jesus Christ possesses all divine attributes, and is therefore God—the true God—God over all*.

Dr. Worcester must have been fully aware that the truth of this position could not be supported but by scriptural evidence that Jesus Christ existed from eternity. He therefore produces the following texts, Letter 3, p. 15, in support of his *eternal existence*. "His goings forth have been from of old, even from EVERLASTING"—"In the beginning he was with God, and was God"—"The same yesterday, and to-day, and forever"—"Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, the First and the Last." These are the principal, if not the only passages on which he seems to rely, as affording conclusive evidence of Christ's eternal existence. But to my mind they do not exhibit such evidence. Were it true that these passages might admit of a construction favourable to the doctrine of Christ's eternal existence, or that he is co-eternal

with the Father; yet must it not be acknowledged that they admit also of a construction which is by no means favourable to that doctrine? And may not the latter construction be susceptible of the best support?

The first of the passages above quoted is from Micah, v. 2. "His goings forth *have been from of old, even from everlasting.*" *His goings forth.* May not this expression signify the *birth* of Christ, the "Ruler" spoken of in the former part of the verse, who was "to *come forth*" from "Bethlehem Ephratah," an event which had been *predicted* "from of old," and as having been *appointed* "from everlasting?" But admitting that the expression is to be referred to a period long before the event of his birth, yet does it indubitably refer to an eternal, and a self-existence? Does the term *everlasting* necessarily express *without beginning*? Instead of this, it generally expresses a limited though a long period. Is it safe or justifiable, then, to infer from this word, as used in the passage under consideration, that Jesus Christ existed from eternity, or that he is self-existent? May it not indeed be reasonably supposed that the expression *from of old* is equivalent to *everlasting*? But is not this expression very far from proving Christ's eternal, or self-existence? I would further ask, whether the expression *goings forth*, in reference to Christ, does not strongly favor the supposition that his existence is *derivative*, and therefore *dependent*? That this was really the fact, the fourth verse will hardly permit us to doubt. "He shall stand and feed *his flock* in the strength of Jehovah, in the majesty of the name of *Jehovah his God.*"

"*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" John i. 1. This passage suggests to my mind several inquiries—Is the eternity of Christ's existence to be inferred from the circumstance that he existed in the "beginning" with God? Has *eternity* a *beginning*? These queries are respectfully submitted. But is the eternity of Christ's existence to be inferred from the circumstance that he existed "with God," or that he "was God?" If Jesus Christ existed *with* God, although *at*, and even *before* the beginning of the creation, does it follow, that he is either *that God* with *whom* he existed, or *equal to him* in "power and glory?" But the Word, or Christ, *was God*. Must he not have existed then from eternity? This conclusion must be admitted, if it be true that Christ is the *Supreme God*. But if it be true that Christ is God Supreme, or "possessed of all divine perfections," and if it be also true that the God with whom he existed is God Supreme, must there not be *two Supreme Gods*? I do not see how this conclusion can be satisfactorily avoided. Have we not, then,

much reason to believe that, as "there are gods many both in heaven and in earth," Jesus Christ must be God in a *subordinate or inferior sense*; and therefore, that he did not exist from eternity?

"*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.*" Heb. xiii. 8. Whether this passage, as Dr. Worcester seems to suppose, proves the eternity of Christ's existence, demands rather our careful consideration than our immediate belief. May it not indeed be a question whether it does not refer rather to the *doctrines*, than to the *person* of Christ? The scope of the passage seems, I think, to favor this suggestion. Ver. 7. "Remember them that have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." Ver. 9. "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines." As these verses stand in immediate connexion with the passage under consideration, the supposition that *Jesus Christ* may intend *his doctrines or gospel*, is not to be considered either as extravagant or unnatural. According to this supposition, the meaning of the text seems to be, that the doctrines of Christ, or of the gospel, continue invariably the same.

But on the supposition that the *person* of Jesus Christ is intended in the text, must not the expressions "yesterday, to-day and forever" be understood in a figurative rather than a literal sense? Is it a literal truth that Jesus Christ, who has undergone various changes—been placed in various situations—suffered hunger and thirst, poverty and humiliation, sorrow, distress, and death itself;—was raised from the dead by the Father—ascended into heaven, and was by the Father highly exalted—and is hereafter to deliver up the kingdom to the Father—"Is it a literal truth," that he has suffered *no variation or shadow of change*? or that he will *always be the same and in all respects that he now is*? This, I think, cannot reasonably be pretended. Besides, does the term *yesterday* necessarily imply existence *from eternity*?

"*Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending; the First and the Last.*" Rev. xxii. 13. Whether this passage is to be considered as spoken by, or as referring to Jesus Christ, may, I think, be doubted. It is indeed the settled opinion of some whose researches after truth, with respect to Jesus, have been deep and indefatigable, that the title "Alpha and Omega, &c." "always denotes *the Father* in the book of Revelation." But admitting that the passage under consideration was spoken by Christ and with application to himself, is it thence to be inferred that he existed from eternity, or that he is self-existent?—May we not consider the title, *Alpha and Omega*, with applica-

tion to Christ, as importing that he is the *Author* and the *Finisher* of our faith—or that he is the *Beginning* of the creation of God, and the *Finisher* of the great work for which he was commissioned by the Father?—*The First and the Last*. May we not consider this title as signifying that Christ is “the *first-born* of every creature”—that he is, next to his Father, *first in dignity and office*, and that no one of like character will ever exist *after him*, or as *his successor*? Although I would not be confident that this is the just, and only admissible construction of the text, yet I would beg leave to ask whether it will admit of any other construction in reference to Jesus Christ, so rational and consistent? Can it reasonably be pretended that Jesus Christ existed *prior* to any other “person,” “being,” or “agent?” If this were indeed the case, then the existence of *the Father* must, it should seem, have been *posterior* to that of *the Son*—for *priority* with respect to the existence of *two persons, agents, or beings*, is too palpable an incongruity to be admitted, as possible.

Let us now examine several passages on which Dr. Worcester seems to place his principal dependence, as proof, that “Jesus Christ possesses all divine attributes, and is therefore God.”—“THIS IS THE TRUE GOD, and eternal life.” “OUR GREAT GOD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.” “GOD OVER ALL, BLESSED FOREVERMORE.” “*All things were made BY HIM, and FOR HIM.*”—“Upon authority such as this, (observes the Dr.) *we* believe that the Son is essentially divine,—essentially equal to the Father.”

This is the true God and eternal life. 1 John v. 20. This verse entire, reads thus ;—“And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.” In relation to this passage I have to observe, that the word *even* is not in the original. It was inserted in the text by the translators, and probably without any sufficient warrant or authority. In an English version of the Bible, 1549, instead of *even*, the word supplied is *through*.—“We are in him that is true, *through* his Son Jesus Christ.” And that this is the just rendering of the verse is, I think, highly probable, if not certain. The true import of the passage seems to be this—“We are brought to the knowledge of the true God, or have an understanding given us to know him by the instrumentality of his Son Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life ; for he is the *teacher* or *preacher of eternal life*.” That the expression, *This is the true God*, is to be referred to the Father, and not to the

Son, appears highly probable, not only from a careful attention to the passage, but especially from the consideration that Jesus Christ has in the most explicit manner assured us, John xvii. 3, that *his Father is the* "ONLY TRUE GOD," and *in distinction from himself*: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." If the *Father is the only true God*, is it not difficult to conceive that any other person, or agent, or being, should be *the true God*? Is there any other true God besides *THE true God*? But if Jesus Christ be this very God, can it be true, also, that the Father is this very God, or that he is another God of like character? What, Sir, shall we say to these things? How, according to Dr. W's belief, are these difficulties to be avoided?

Our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Titus ii. 13. This passage cannot, I think, be apposite to the purpose for which Dr. Worcester has quoted it, unless the title *Great God*, is given to *our Saviour Jesus Christ*. But is this indeed the case? Although I would not peremptorily decide that the title is given exclusively to the Father, yet I do think it highly probable, if not certain, that it is. "*The appearing of the glory of the Great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ,*" is the literal translation of the text.—Our Saviour Jesus Christ will appear at the last day, in his own glory, attended with the appearance of his Father's glory. This seems to be the plain and just meaning of the text. Must not the *Great God* then intend *the one God the Father*, who is every where distinguished from our Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom this magnificent title, it is believed, is *never* given by any inspired writer?

God over all blessed forevermore. Rom. ix. 5. This passage is not so correctly quoted as could be wished. The whole verse reads thus ;—"Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen."—According to the translation and pointing of this passage, Christ seems to be designated as *God over all*. But as the Greek words are of ambiguous construction, it is far from being certain, that the title *God over all* belongs, or is to be applied to Christ. The words may signify either—*Of whom Christ came : God, who is over all, be blessed forever. Amen.*—Or, *Of whom Christ came, who is over all : God be blessed, forever. Amen.* That either of these renderings is fairly admissible, cannot, I am persuaded, be reasonably questioned. And that one or the other of them is to be admitted as probably correct, may be inferred from the consideration that the word *Blessed* seems to be an

appropriate name of the Father, and that Jesus Christ is the *Son of the Blessed*. As a circumstantial argument in support of the above renderings, it may be observed, that the constant doctrine of the church, in its earliest periods, appears to have been that Christ is *not the God over all*; but that this title is *peculiar to the Father*.

All things were created by him and for him. Col. i. 16. The import of this passage may be more obvious if viewed in connexion with the context. I will therefore exhibit it in this connexion. Verses 15—17. “Who (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature. For by him all things were created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.” This passage, it is thought by many, affords very strong, and even conclusive evidence that Jesus Christ “is essentially divine—essentially equal to the Father.” But to my mind, it does not afford this evidence; for the apostle seems carefully to have avoided the use of such terms or titles with application to Jesus Christ, as are peculiarly descriptive of God the Father. He speaks of Christ as *the image of the invisible God*. But can it reasonably be supposed that the *image* of the invisible God is a person, agent or being, who is *himself* the invisible God, or equal to the invisible God? But if the supposition is to be admitted, must it not also be admitted in relation to the first progenitor of the human race, who was made in *God’s own image*? The apostle speaks also of Christ as the *first born of every creature*, and as the *first born from the dead*. But can these things be said, with truth, of the self-existent and unchangeable God, or of any person or being equal to the self-existent and unchangeable God? Was the self-existent God, or any person equal to him, *ever born—ever dead—or ever raised from the dead*, and by *another being* too, called *his Father*? The apostle adds, *for it pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell*. But if all fulness dwelt in Christ by the *will* or *pleasure* of the Father, must not this fulness have been a *derived fulness*? Does it not seem to imply, that, for all the attributes or excellencies which Christ possessed, he was *dependent* on his Father? In the view of these things, is it not reasonable, I would ask, to conclude, although “all things were created by him (Jesus Christ) and for him,” that he was the subordinate or instrumental creator of them? That this must have been the case, seems highly probable not only from the above suggestions, but especially from the consideration that all things are *of* God, and only *by* Jesus Christ, and that God made the

worlds *by* or *through* Jesus Christ. Nor is it unimportant to remark, that in the passage under consideration, the original word rendered *by* ought, as I believe, to have been rendered by the particle *in* or *through*. Had this been the rendering, the passage would read thus—"All things were created *in* or *through* him, and for him." According to this rendering, the meaning of the passage evidently is, that the Father made all things in or through his Son Jesus Christ, *for him*, or to be in *subjection to him*. These remarks, my dear Sir, are submitted to your serious consideration, as, probably, exhibiting the truth with respect to Jesus; and I may add, as expressing the views of christians, generally, in the early and pure ages of the church. Its most distinguished luminaries did not scruple to say—"All things were made *through* the Word, not by him (as the original cause) but by one superior and greater than the Word." "All things were made by (or through) the Word, as the ministering cause, that so he might refer us to the supreme power and efficiency of the Father, as the Maker of all things."

Letter 2, p. 38, Dr. Worcester supposes that Jesus Christ is essentially divine from the consideration that "all men are required to *honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.*" John v. 23. That this passage should be considered as requiring us to honour the Son with the same kind and degree of honour as is due to the Father, may very possibly arise from the want of suitable attention to the passage itself, to its context, and to the general scope and connexion of the scriptures. And that this is really the case, there is much reason to apprehend. The Greek particle rendered *as*, or *even as*, never, I believe, denotes strict or perfect equality, but only a greater or less degree of resemblance. A few examples may suffice as proof of the truth of this remark. "Be ye kind, forgiving one another, *even as* God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters, *as* unto Christ." "Be ye perfect, *even as* your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Do these injunctions, Sir, require us to graht forgiveness to our fellow men *in the same sense and degree*, as God grants forgiveness?—or that servants should obey their masters, *in the same sense and degree*, as they should obey Christ?—Or that we should be perfect, *in the same sense and degree*, as our heavenly Father is perfect? This you do not suppose. Will the particle *as*, then, justify the belief that we are to give the same kind and degree of honour to the Son as to the Father? This, I think, cannot reasonably be admitted, and especially when the reason which is assigned for honouring the Son is duly considered, viz. that "the Father hath committed

all judgment to the Son." As Christ is dependent on his Father for "all judgment," it should seem that he is not to be honoured as the Supreme and Independent Being, but as a Judge of the Father's appointment, and as his ambassador. "He," therefore, "that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father that sent him." Whoever does not honour the Son as the appointed Judge, whom the "Father sent," does not honour the Father. But is the honour, which is due to a judge, the same, in kind and degree, with that which is due to the chief magistrate who vested him with his office? Or is the honour which is due to an ambassador—one who is sent, the same, both in kind and degree, with that which is due to the sovereign by whom he is sent?

Letter 3, p. 17. "*My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought to kill him, because—he said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.*" John v. 17, 18. The Jews, Dr. Worcester observes, "understood Christ to call God his Father, in a sense which made God his natural Father, and himself in nature divine and equal with the Father." And that the Jews understood Christ as he meant to be understood, is the Doctor's belief; for he says, that Christ's "being Son, does not imply inferiority in nature to the Father. On the contrary, it imports sameness and equality of nature."

The expression, *natural Father*, in this quotation, if not exceptionable, I consider as very ambiguous. But in whatever sense it is to be understood, it seems inconsistent with the supposition that Jesus Christ is a self-existent and independent person, or being; or that he is equal to his Father. Nor is it very likely that the Jews understood Christ as claiming equality with the Supreme God. But if they did, it is very far from being certain that they rightly apprehended his meaning. It is to be observed that the occasion of his saying, *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*, was the accusation of the Jews, that he had broken the sabbath, by healing an impotent man, and their attempt on that account, to kill him. Is not this then the most natural meaning of his words—"As Almighty God has always performed works of mercy and beneficence, as well on the sabbath, as on other days, so I, his Son, perform similar works." "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"—that "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day?" But will you charge me with violating the sabbath, because I imitate my Father in works of beneficence? Or will you accuse me of making myself "equal with God," because I call him my Father? Or because I tell you that I perform, as well as my Father,

works of mercy? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do. I can of mine own self do nothing. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true," verses 19, 30—32. If Christ meant to be understood by the Jews as claiming equality with his Father, and as performing miracles by his own independent agency, is it reasonable to suppose that he would have spoken of himself, as *learning* of his Father, as *dependent* on his Father for whatever he did, and as seeking *not his own*, but *the will of his Father*? Had the Jews been impressed with the belief that Christ claimed equality with God, does not his solemn asseveration seem to have been designed to efface the impression? Yet Dr. W. supposes that Nathanael, when he addressed Christ as "the Son of God," "evidently understood this appellation to import true divinity." "It cannot reasonably be doubted," he adds, "that such was the understanding of Peter and Thomas, and the other disciples, when they acknowledged Jesus to be 'the CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD,' and worshipped him as their '*Lord, and their God.*' But this representation I must consider as not a little inaccurate, as Nathanael does not appear to have considered Christ as truly divine, or God. If Thomas viewed and worshipped Christ as *his* Lord and *his* God, yet I think Dr. Worcester can hardly be justified in saying that "the other disciples" worshipped him as "*their* Lord and *their* God;" as he has not scriptural authority for saying so. But is it certain that *Thomas* worshipped Christ as God, equal to the Father? The text to which Dr. W. refers, only states that Thomas "said unto him, (Christ) my Lord and my God." But is this unquestionably an act of worship—of supreme worship paid to Christ? Thomas does not say to Christ, *thou art* my Lord and my God; but exclaims in a transport of admiration, on being convinced that he was indeed risen from the dead, *my Lord! and my God!* which, so far as we know, might have been directed to the Father, who had raised him from the grave. That this was really the fact, was the opinion of a distinguished ancient Father of the fourth century, who says that Thomas "did not call Christ, Lord and God; but being astonished at the great miracle of his resurrection, and the full evidence of it that he had afforded him, he praised God who had raised him from the dead." But whether this is the true import of the words of Thomas, I

pretend not positively to decide ; yet I see not but it may safely be decided, that if Thomas addressed Jesus Christ as his Supreme Lord and God, he must have done it to the exclusion of the one God, the Father ; for there is but one Supreme God. When I consider, my dear Sir, that Thomas was a Jew by birth and education—that he believed that the Lord his God, the God of Israel, was one Lord, and that besides him there was none else, I find it difficult to conceive that he should have considered and worshipped Jesus Christ, who he knew had been crucified and slain, as his Supreme Lord and God. Nor is this difficulty lessened, when I further consider that Christ had never required either Thomas or the other disciples to worship or acknowledge him as God, but his Father only. But if it were really the belief of Thomas that Christ was God Supreme, must not this belief have been contradictory to the belief, or assurance of Christ himself? Did not Christ know that the one God, even the Father, was *his* God, as well as the God of Thomas and his other disciples? Did he not, in speaking to them after his resurrection, say, “I ascend to *my* Father and to your Father, and to *my* God and your God?” Is this consistent with the supposition that Jesus Christ is God—the Supreme God? If so, the consistency seems to me a very strange one.

Dr. Worcester supposes, Letter 3, p. 31, “that the same divine honours are ascribed in the Bible to the Son as to the Father.”—If this be really the case, I much regret it, that he has not more satisfactorily supported the supposed fact by Bible authority. That the Bible represents Jesus Christ as an object of honour and worship, I readily acknowledge as truth worthy of all acceptance. But when I consider that this honour or worship is to be paid to him as “the Lamb that was slain,” as “the first begotten of God, whom he brought into the world,” and that it does not ultimately terminate on him, but “is to *the glory of God the Father*,” I cannot be satisfied that “the same divine honours are ascribed in the Bible to the Son, as to the Father.” And do you, Sir, find no difficulty in believing that a person or being who was *slain*—who was *begotten*, and *brought into the world*, is to be worshipped as the Supreme, self-existent, and independent God? Can we easily believe this? Or must we consider those as “advancing into a region of frost—of darkness—of the shadow of death,” who do not worship Jesus Christ as the Supreme God? This Dr. Worcester supposes. Nor can Trinitarian christians, if I understand him, “meet in blessed fellowship” with those who do not *thus* worship the Son of God ; for they “adore him as ‘*the true God and eternal life*,’ and delight in the ascription, ‘Unto him that

loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father,' &c."—In view of this passage I would ask whether the christians, whom Dr. W. and others cannot conscientiously admit to their fellowship, do not professedly worship *one true God*? But does he, or do they who are in sentiment with him, worship more than one true God, or do they admit the existence of more than one God of this character? As *unto us* there is but "one God, the Father," and as the "Father is the *only true God*," is it not difficult to conceive that Jesus Christ also should be *the true God*? Besides, is it not equally difficult to conceive that "*the true God*" should have "washed us from our sins in his *own blood*, and made us kings and priests unto God and *his Father*?"

Letter 2, pp. 34, 35, Dr. W. observes "that Jesus Christ is revealed as our Redeemer and Saviour"—"that he is the foundation of all our hopes for eternity," and "that we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins solely on account of the merits of his blood."—In other places, as we have before seen, he speaks of this same Redeemer and Saviour, as an *agent, being, God*, essentially divine, and as possessing all divine attributes. He must therefore be understood as representing Christ, as our Redeemer and Saviour, not in a subordinate or inferior sense, but in the first, or principal sense—and that, in this sense, we are dependent on him for redemption, and for all our hopes for eternity.—But if we are *solely* dependent on Christ for redemption and salvation, he must be our Redeemer and Saviour, not only in the supreme or highest sense, but, as it appears to me, to the exclusion of every other person, being, or thing. I cannot therefore but strongly apprehend that the Dr.'s belief with respect to Christ as Redeemer and Saviour, and with respect to our dependence on, and obligation to him, is not founded in truth.

In the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament God is represented as the *only Redeemer* of his people. Nor is *Redeemer* ever applied to Christ in the New Testament. Christ is indeed once said to be *redemption*; but in immediate connexion with this, we are assured that he is *made redemption of or by God*. God the Father has appointed him the instrument of his goodness and mercy, in conveying to us deliverance from sin and death. Christ has thus been made redemption, "that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the *Lord*," *Jehovah*, who made him redemption. Jesus Christ is indeed represented as a Redeemer, Deliverer, &c. But is he not so represented in a subordinate or inferior sense? "When

the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son—made under the law, to *redeem* them that were under the law.” Gal. iv. 4, 5. But as Christ was *sent of God*, and *made under the law*, is it not difficult to conceive that he is our *Supreme Redeemer*? If Christ, in this sense, is our Redeemer, why are we required to “*glorify God*,” because “we are bought with a price?” and to give “thanks unto *the Father* who hath delivered” or redeemed “us from the power of darkness?” Although “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us,” by “having been slain,” yet does not the circumstance that he was *made* a curse, by being *slain*, very strongly indicate that he is only our *instrumental Redeemer*? Are we not then chiefly to glory in, and to glorify God the Father?”

Jesus Christ, according to Dr. Worcester, is revealed in the gospel not only as our Redeemer, but as our *Saviour*, and in the highest sense. But has he proved this great point? To my satisfaction he has not. That the title of *Saviour* is applied to Christ in the gospel is unquestionably true. It is equally true also that the same title is applied to other persons. But is it not applied to *God alone*, in the *highest or supreme sense*? If this is not the case, what are we to understand by the unequivocal declaration of God? “I, even I, am the Lord; and *beside me* there is *no Saviour*.” “There is no God else beside me; a just God and a *Saviour*; there is none beside me,” Isa. xliii. 11, and xlv. 21. This same God is devoutly acknowledged by Mary, Luke, i. 47, as *her Saviour*. And “God *our Saviour*” is distinguished from “Christ *our hope*,” 1 Tim. i. 1. “The living God is styled the *Saviour* of all men, especially of those that believe.” He is “the only wise God *our Saviour*,” Jude 25. Several other passages might, were it necessary, be quoted, in which the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is styled our Saviour. Here we see not only that *God*, the *living God*, the *only wise God*, is revealed as *our Saviour*, but as a Saviour, *beside whom* there is *none else*, and in distinction from Jesus Christ *our hope*. Can it be true then, as Dr. W. supposes, that Jesus Christ is revealed to us as *such* a Saviour? Is it to be supposed that the self-existent and Supreme Saviour, was “*born, sent* into the world, *exalted* and *raised up*, &c.?” But all these things are true with respect to Jesus Christ; and for all these things he was dependent on his Father. The “Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world,” and “exalted him to be a Prince and a Saviour.” Accordingly the great multitude who stand before the throne of God, the Father, “ascribe to *HIM* salvation.” And this they are under the strongest obliga-

tion to do, as HE “appointed them to obtain salvation through, or by, Jesus Christ.” In the view of these things can it reasonably be doubted that we are to magnify God *our Saviour* in the most *exalted sense*, who raised and sent Christ to be a Saviour? and especially when we consider that Christ himself prayed to God as *his Saviour*, who *alone* was able to save him. “Father, save me from this hour.” In “the days of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto HIM who was *able to save* him from death.” Is a *praying Saviour* to be considered as a *self-sufficient* and *independent* Saviour? Or is such a Saviour “the foundation of *all* our hopes for eternity,” as Dr. W. pronounces him to be? If so, what must be the situation of those who “set their hope in God”—whose “faith and hope are in God”—of them that “hope in *his mercy*?” Or with what propriety could the prophet say of God, “he is my *portion*, therefore will I *hope in him*.” Did he consider Christ as the foundation of *all* his hope? Or did an apostle consider him as such a foundation when he expressed his “*hope towards God*?” If God be not the principal or primary foundation of hope, how could he have been “the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in time of trouble?” Or with what propriety could they have been exhorted to “hope in him,” and with the assurance of “blessedness,” if they did so? Can these things, my dear Sir, be duly considered, and *no foundation* be found for *any hope* but *Jesus Christ*? Jesus Christ is indeed a foundation—a sure foundation. But by whom is this foundation laid? By “the Lord God.” “The prophets and apostles” also are “a foundation” of which “Jesus Christ himself is the chief corner stone.” Yet as the Lord God laid the foundation, must he not be the *chief object*—the *principal foundation* of our hope? “He is the rock; his work is perfect.” But who is a foundation—“who is a rock” in the highest sense, “save *our God*?” Let us not then “lightly esteem *THIS ROCK* of our salvation;”—this everlasting and immovable “Foundation of all our hopes for eternity.”

Dr. Worcester not only says, that Jesus Christ is revealed as the foundation of all our hopes for eternity, but “that we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins solely on account of the merits of his blood.” Whether his view of this very important and interesting subject is correct, I am not prepared to decide, as I am far from being satisfied that I understand what it is. He represents Christ, indeed, as our *surety*, our *substitute*, as a *vicarious sufferer*, and the *propitiation* for our sins, in different parts of his Letters, and produces several passages from the New Testament which he thinks sufficient to justify that

representation. Nor will I say that he has not sufficient ground for thinking so. Yet it seems to me that he has thrown no light upon the subject. His expressions are too general and vague to convey clear and distinct ideas; nor can I but be apprehensive that some of them are calculated to lead many of his readers to improper, if not dangerous conclusions, particularly the sentence under consideration. If "we have the forgiveness of our sins *solely* on account of the merits of Christ's blood," nothing else but that blood, it seems, is necessary to forgiveness; and that forgiveness is *bestowed on no other consideration*. Besides, if Christ's blood completely *merits* the forgiveness of sins, I do not see that the forgiveness of the sinner can be an act of *grace* or *favour* in God. Can grace or favour, in forgiving sin, be compatible with the consideration that forgiveness of sin has been *merited*? Moreover, if Christ, by his blood, has merited the forgiveness of sins, I see not that any argument can reasonably be urged against the doctrine of universal salvation; for Christ "died *for all*." Nor do I see why all have not a *claim* to forgiveness as a matter of *right*, if forgiveness has been *merited* for them. Perhaps, however, the Doctor's theory of forgiveness, does not lead to these conclusions, although it seems to do it. Instead therefore of peremptorily deciding upon the subject, I will invite your attention, Sir, to several passages of scripture relating to the forgiveness of sin, which seem to clash with Dr. W.'s belief. "For thy names' sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it is great." "O Lord, hear, O Lord, forgive, for thine own sake." John the baptist was to make known the doctrine of the *forgiveness of sins* "through the tender mercies of God." And John the apostle observes, "If we confess our sins, he (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "When ye stand praying," said Christ to his disciples, "forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses." "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your Father who is in heaven, will forgive you." Is not the import of these passages plain and obvious? Do they not teach us, and *without a figure*, that God forgives sins for *his own name's sake*—his *mercy's sake*—through his *tender mercies*—through his *faithfulness* and *justice to himself*; and that the *condition* of his *forgiving us*, is *our exercising forgiveness towards others* who have offended us? That we have any *meritorious claim*, however, to the divine forgiveness, founded on the consideration that we forgive offenders, is very far from my belief. The doctrine of personal merit in this great affair is utterly to be disclaimed. Nor would I be understood to insinuate that

the pardon of sin is not bestowed on sinners, who repent, *by, or through, or in reference to* "the blood of Christ." That it is in this way bestowed, I fully believe. But that "we have the forgiveness of our sins *solely* on account of the merits of Christ's blood," seems to me irreconcilable with the scripture passages cited above. But as I am very uncertain whether I rightly conceive the meaning of Dr. Worcester's position, I would not be understood as pronouncing against it an unqualified condemnation. I must say, however, that I consider his manner of expressing his belief as exceptionable, and calculated to impress on the minds of many, the idea that we are much more indebted to Christ the Son of God for pardon and salvation, than to God the Father; that by his death he has rendered the Father merciful or propitious, and that he is the *chief object of our love and confidence*. As I view such a belief repugnant to the whole tenor of revelation, I cannot but think that much caution ought to be used by religious instructors in their discourses and publications to prevent its impression, and injurious influence. My dear Sir, is it to be admitted as a doctrine of revelation that Jesus Christ has, by *his blood*, "*RECOMPENSED the justice of God for innumerable sins?*" If in any other than a qualified and highly figurative sense he has done this, I see not how God can *pardon* those sins either on principles of justice, or mercy. If, in a strict and proper sense, his justice has been "*recompensed*," must not the innumerable sins for which the recompense has been made be completely cancelled? How then, after this, do they admit of forgiveness on *any consideration*?

It was my original design to make no remarks on Dr. Worcester's statements in relation to the doctrine of the atonement. But as they appear to have been made with the view, partly at least, to support the essential divinity of Christ, I thought it not irrelevant to my principal object to make the above strictures upon them. Should they be instrumental to a more thorough investigation, and to a more clear and satisfactory developement of this great and difficult subject, I shall greatly rejoice.

I shall now examine several things advanced by Dr. Worcester, which, although they relate principally to the character of Christ, may be considered, not improperly, as

MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES.

The first relates to the union of Christ the Son, with God the Father; which union, if I understand Dr. W. furnishes evidence, in his opinion, of the essential divinity of the Son, and of his equality to the Father. A few re-

marks have already been made upon this subject : But its importance demands a more particular consideration.

"Jesus," the Dr. observes, Let. 3, pp. 20, 21, 22, "in his memorable intercessory prayer with his disciples, says," 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one ; AS THOU FATHER ART IN ME AND I IN THEE, *that they also may be one in us,*' John xvii. 20, 21. And christians are abundantly exhorted in the scriptures to seek and preserve the most perfect unity." But "in what," asks the Doctor, "does this unity consist?" "Undoubtedly," he answers, "in being, as St. Paul expresses it, 'perfectly united together in the same mind, and in the same judgment'—'being knit together in love.' When christians are thus in mind, in judgment, and in love, perfectly joined and knit together, they are in the most important and interesting sense, one, &c." "Were they perfectly holy ; had they also exactly the same thoughts on every subject, the same views of every object, the same affections, and regards towards every being and thing ; and had they moreover a perfect knowledge of each others' minds and hearts, their union would be most complete." "A union of this *kind* does exist in a greater or less degree among believers, and will increase, until it attain its highest perfection in the heavenly world. This is the oneness into which Jesus prayed that his people might be brought, and which he *resembled* to that which exists between him and his Father," although it "falls infinitely short of it." Whether the Doctor is correct in saying that the union existing between believers, falls *infinitely short* of the union which exists between Christ and his Father, may be reasonably questioned. But however this may be, it is admitted that there is a *resemblance* between them ;—that they are alike in *kind*. The union in both cases is of a *moral nature*, a *union in love*, &c. But because Christ is thus united to his Father, is it necessarily to be inferred that he is "essentially divine," that he is "possessed of all divine attributes," and that "he is equal to his Father?" "If believers may be *one*, both in Christ and in the Father,"—if they may "be one, *as,*" and "*even as* Christ and the Father are *one*," must it not be difficult to conceive, that the *oneness* between Christ and his Father is *any other* than of a *moral nature* ? But does such a union imply, either that Christ is equal to his Father, or that he and his Father are one being or God ? I do not see that it implies either of these suppositions. On examining the chapter from which Dr. W. quoted the intercessory prayer of Jesus, I find him praying to his Father, to glorify him—acknowledging his dependence on his Father for the power

which he possessed—speaking of his Father as the only true God, and of himself as sent from God, &c. How, my dear Sir, are these things to be reconciled with the supposition that Jesus Christ is “one God with the Father,” or “that all the infinite knowledge, and power, and wisdom, and goodness of the Father, are in the Son?” But let us see how Dr. Worcester maintains the supposition.

It is an assertion of Christ, he observes, “*I and my Father are one.*”—But *how* are they one?—*one God*? If so, the fact completely destroys the doctrine of a *triune* God. For if Christ and his Father are so united as to constitute one God, a third person cannot be associated with the Godhead. *That one* which is constituted of *two*, cannot at the same time be constituted of *three*. But if this oneness is of a moral kind, implying union in love, design and pursuit, what evidence does it furnish that Christ and his Father are one God? Are not christians united to the Son and to the Father, *even as* the Son is united to the Father? “*Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.*” But are not christians both *in* the Son, and *in* the Father? How then does this circumstance prove that Christ is equal to, or one God with the Father?

“*No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*” But have not many men *seen* Christ? How then can Christ be God, since God is *invisible*? As Christ was *begotten*, how could he have been *self-existent*? As he was *cherished* in the *bosom* of his Father, must he not have been *dependent* on his Father? And as he *declared* his Father, must he not have been his Father’s *messenger*?

“*As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father.*” The inference of Dr. W. is, that “the Son has a perfect knowledge of his Father’s infinite mind and will.” But is this inference to be admitted as indubitably true? If so, will not the spirits of just men in the future world have a perfect knowledge of the infinite mind and will of God? for in that world “shall they know” God, “*even as* they are known” of God. But as no man will ever even in the future world have a perfect knowledge of the infinite mind and will of God, is it not presumptuous to infer from the above text that the knowledge of Christ is co-extensive with the knowledge of his Father, and especially as he has expressly declared that he does not know all that his Father knows?

“*The Son can do nothing of himself, but what (but as, Campbell’s translation) he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.*” Dr. Worcester supposes the meaning of this passage to be,

“that all that is done by the Father is in the same manner, and at the same time, done by the Son.” But if the Dr’s. supposition be true, what are we to understand by the declaration that “all things are *of* God,” and only “*by* Jesus Christ?” Does this imply that Christ does all things in the *same manner* as they are done by the Father? The “Father hath put the times or the seasons in his *own power*.” But is this consistent with the supposition that Christ hath put these same times or seasons, in the *power of his Father*, or in *his own power*? The Father begat the Son, sent him into the world, gave him a commandment what he should do, and what he should speak—committed all judgment to him—ordained him to be the Judge of the world—set him on his holy hill of Zion—gave him a kingdom—anointed him with the oil of gladness—delivered him into the hands of wicked men to be crucified—forsook him on the cross—raised him from the dead—exalted him to his own right hand, and gave him a more excellent name or dignity than angels. These things, my dear Sir, God the Father did in relation to his Son. But did the Son do *all* these things, and in the *same manner* and at the *same time* his Father did them! How could the Son *beget himself*, *send himself*, &c. These things are too mysterious for my comprehension. Nor can I conceive that *two persons or agents* ever did, or that it is possible they should do *any one thing at the same time and in the same manner*. I must think, therefore, that Dr. W. is not a little incorrect in saying, “that all that is done by the Father is in the same manner, and at the same time, done by the Son.” If this were true, with what propriety could the Son have expressly declared that he “could *do nothing of himself*,” and in reply to the accusation of the Jews, when they said that he made “himself equal with God?” The truth, as stated by the evangelist, is, that the works which Christ did, “he did in his *Father’s name*”—and that “the *Father* who dwelt in him *did the works*.” Agreeably Christ prayed to the Father when he wrought miracles, and acknowledged his dependence on the Father. “*In him* (Christ) *dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*.” “*He is the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person*.” “Therefore he says, ‘*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also*.’” Such is the unity of the Father and the Son,”—a unity which Dr. W. supposes implies, “that the will and power of Christ, are the same with the will and power of the Father.” And of course that the Son is equal to, and one with the Father. But do the above quoted passages prove this doctrine? Because the Godhead, or God, dwells in Christ, does it follow that *Christ is himself God*? If so,

must not christians be the subjects of real divinity? for "God dwells in them!" Should it be said that it is not to be inferred that Christ is God, simply because God dwelleth in him, but because *all the fulness* of the Godhead dwelleth in him, may it not pertinently be replied, that christians are "filled," or are capable of being "filled with *all the fulness* of God?" Should stress be laid on the term *head*, as implying a *triune God*, may it not with propriety be asked whether there is not a great incongruity in supposition that the *Father*, the *Son* and the *Spirit*, all dwell in the *Son*? But if there be no incongruity in this, I would ask whether, if the fulness of the "Sacred Three" dwell in the Son, the Father and the Spirit can be *equal to the Son*? The fact however is, that the *fulness* which dwells in Christ is the *fulness* of the *Father*. But what is this fulness aside from those "treasures of wisdom and knowledge" imparted to Christ by the Father for the benefit of the church, or to qualify him to fulfil his great commission? Is it not by this fulness that "*he is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person*?" Whatever may be intended by the expression, *the brightness of the Father's glory*, it cannot imply, it should seem, that the Father's glory is the glory of Christ; but rather that Christ receives his brightness from his Father's glory. Nor can the phrase, *the express image of his person*, imply, I should think, that Christ is the *substance* or *essence* of the Father; for *image* seems evidently to denote something different from the *person*, *substance*, or *essence* of which it is an image. It is to me, Sir, very difficult to conceive that Christ can be both the *substance* or *essence* of his Father, and the *image* of his substance or essence. Must not the image of any person or thing, however "express," be entirely distinct from that person or thing? Is it then to be inferred from the consideration that Christ is the brightness of the Father's glory, &c. that he is equal to his Father, or so united to the Father as to be one God with him? Or is this inference to be made from the consideration that "he that hath seen the Son, hath seen the Father also?" If this declaration of Christ be strictly and literally true, I see not but the Father must be literally visible. But as "no man hath seen God at any time," as "he is the invisible God," the passage under review is not to be taken in a strict and literal sense. Its import seems to be, that Christ was his Father's representative—the revealer of his will—that the wisdom and power of the Father resided in him, and were by him displayed to the view of men, so that they who saw Christ, and the works which he wrought by the power of the Father, might be said, in a figurative or qualified sense, to have seen the Father.

Letter 2, p. 7, Dr. Worcester views Christ as possessed of two natures, divine and human. "Do you not know, (he asks,) that Trinitarians hold Jesus Christ to be God and man united in *one person*—that this complex person suffered and died, and that his death had all the importance, all the merit, all the efficacy, which could be derived to it from the infinite dignity of such a person?" Pages 32, 33, he observes, "The scriptures teach us that the same WORD, who was in the beginning with God and was God, *was MADE OF A WOMAN, made under the law*;—that though being in THE FORM OF GOD, *he thought it not robbery to be EQUAL WITH GOD*; yet he made himself of no reputation, AND TOOK UPON HIM THE FORM OF A SERVANT, AND WAS MADE IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN; and being found in fashion AS A MAN, *he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*" Phil. ii. 6, 8. "We therefore believe, that in the person of the Son, GOD *was manifest in THE FLESH*, in our own nature; that, in the person of Jesus Christ, God and man were united." "Viewing him, then, in his two natures, divine and human, we see a perfect consistency in his being represented, as he is in the scriptures, both as God and man; as *essentially* equal to the Father, and yet in other respects unequal." "This doctrine, (adds the Doctor,) we feel ourselves bound to believe as a most interesting and important truth." This union of two infinitely unequal natures in the person of Christ, he acknowledges to be an incomprehensible mystery. But being clearly revealed, as he supposes, in the word of God, he thinks it must be received as a most important truth. Nor should I question, my dear Sir, our obligation thus to receive it, however incomprehensible the doctrine, were I satisfactorily convinced that it is a doctrine of revelation. But is this to be admitted? Do you find no difficulty, Sir, in believing that a person or being *essentially* divine, and equal to God the Father, was *made of a woman—made under the law*—that he was *made* in the *likeness of men*, and that he became *obedient unto death*, even the death of the cross? But all these things Dr. Worcester applies to the "*Word*," whom he considers as God in the supreme or highest sense. Whether he intends to be understood according to the most obvious meaning of his expressions, I know not. If he does, I dare not assent to his belief, and especially when I consider that the same person or being, "who thought it not robbery to be equal with God," was, in consequence of his humiliation, obedience and death, rewarded by his Father, in that he "highly exalted him, and gave a name which is above every name." Is it not very difficult to conceive that a person or being,

who is *God in the highest sense*, should be *thus rewarded* for his obedience and sufferings unto death, by another person or being, whom he obeyed, and by whose appointment he suffered and died? Is it not much more reasonable to suppose that this person or being is *God*, in an *inferior or subordinate sense*? My mind cannot but revolt at the idea, "that the ever blessed God suffered and died on the cross." Nor does this idea seem *exactly* to comport with Dr. Worcester's view of the subject. He says, Letter 3, p. 37, "This phrase is not mine." "We hold Jesus Christ to be God and man, united in one person; and that this *one complex person* suffered and died." "We do not say that the ever blessed God, *separately* from man, suffered and died, but we do say that Jesus Christ, *as God and man in one person*, did suffer and die." But if the "ever blessed God," as UNITED with man, "suffered and died," then a person somewhat greater than the ever blessed God, must have suffered and died; as the union of the ever blessed God to a man, by which he became *one person* with the man, must, so far as I can see, have constituted that person a greater being, than the person of God separate from the supposed union. This conclusion, however, may be considered as inadmissible, although I cannot see that it is so. I will therefore only say, that if the ever blessed God, as *united* with man, suffered and died, his sufferings and death must, to say the least, have been as *real* and as *great* as if he had not been united to the man. Should it be said, that notwithstanding this "complex person suffered and died," yet essential divinity was not subject to suffering, nor to the pains of death, may it not be pertinently asked, how then could "*God and man in one person* suffer and die?" If two natures, "divine and human," constitute one, and *but one person*; and if *that self same person* suffered and died, does it not necessarily follow, that the *divinity* as well as the *humanity* was subject to suffering, and the pangs of death? This consequence does not, as it seems to me, admit of evasion. Should the consequence, however, be denied, must it not of course be admitted that the *humanity only* of this complex person suffered and died? If *both* the natures did not suffer and die, then surely but *one* of them suffered and died;—and if the divine nature did not suffer and die; then the *human nature only* suffered and died. But if the human nature only of the supposed complex person of Christ suffered and died, what is "*all the importance, all the merit, all the efficacy*," thence resulting? The sufferings and death of *a man* could not, I should think, make *an infinite atonement*, or "*recompense* the justice of God for innumerable sins." But if on the other

hand a "person, or being, or God, possessed of all divine attributes," suffered and died upon the cross, with what propriety could he have exclaimed in his agony, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" Could one person, being, or God, possessed of all divine attributes, be so forsaken of another person, being or God of the same description, as to feel the need of divine support and consolation!

Several other difficulties arising from the supposed complex character of Christ present themselves to my view, and weary me with painful conjectures.—If "Jesus Christ be God and man, united in one person," when did this union commence? at the birth of Jesus? If so, do you find no difficulty in supposing that *this holy child*, when lying in a manger and nourished at his mother's breast, and when subject to her authority, and to the authority of Joseph, his reputed father, *was God in the highest sense of the word?* Is it not irreverent thus to view and speak of the self-existent and eternal God? Is it not highly improper and incongruous to suppose that a person or being possessed of all divine attributes, had a mother and ancestors traceable to remote antiquity? that he had brothers and sisters? that he grew in stature and in knowledge, and that he wrought for a series of years at a servile occupation?—that he was subject to all the sinless infirmities of human nature?—that he had flesh and blood, as we have? that he was susceptible of, and actually experienced the sensations of hunger, and thirst, and bodily pain? Is it not equally difficult to conceive that he should realize grief, and fear, and distress, and sorrow of soul even unto death! How *can* these things be? Yet you will not deny or question that they are all true with respect to the person of Jesus Christ. But if you will not allow them to be true of a *person* possessed of all divine attributes, must you not of course deny that these are the attributes of Jesus Christ? Perhaps however you will say that whatever of infirmity and of suffering is ascribed to Christ, is to be understood of his humanity only. But if this be admitted, how is the supposed complex character of Christ to be maintained? for this complex character, it is to be remembered, constitutes but one person. Is nothing then of infirmity and suffering to be applied to Christ's *person*? If not, how can they be applied to *Christ himself*? Is not the term *Christ* equivalent to the term *person* of Christ? Besides, if nothing of infirmity and suffering were incident to the person—the *whole person* of Christ, how shall we find an unspeakable value—an *infinite merit* in his death?

I have further to ask—What is *intended* by that union of divine and human nature which are supposed to constitute one *person*, one *Christ*? Does this supposed union consist in a coalescence and intermixture of “God and man,” so as to constitute a person or being possessed of *one soul—one consciousness—one intelligence—one will—one power of action, &c.*? If this is to be admitted, what is the ground of distinction between the supposed divine and human natures, or between the divine and human soul of Christ? No such ground seems to exist. Nor, so far as I can see, is there any sufficient reason for ascribing some things to the divine and other things to the human nature of Christ. When *he* prayed, must it not have been the act of *one soul*? Must not *his* joy and *his* sorrow have been realized by *one numerical consciousness*? Must not all that *he* said of *himself* have been the result of *one and the same intelligence*? And must not all that *he* did, have been the effect of *one individual will and power of action*? Why then should *two intelligent natures*, the one divine, and the other human, be ascribed to Christ? How is this consistent with his “having in *all things* been made *like unto his brethren*”—beings of the human race? Have beings of the human race *two intelligent natures*, the one divine and the other human? Or have they *two human intelligent natures*? Why then should it be thought that Christ has two intelligent natures? Is not this supposition *merely gratuitous*? Should it, however, be contended that Jesus Christ is possessed of two distinct souls, consciousnesses, &c. I have then to ask whether it is not very improper to speak of these two souls, consciousnesses, &c. as constituting *one numerical person*, or *Christ*? How is it possible that two distinct intelligent natures should constitute one individual intelligent person or being? But on the supposition that this were possible, and the real fact with respect to Jesus Christ, yet, I would ask, how is it to be ascertained what names, titles, words, and actions, are to be ascribed to the *one* of these natures, and what to the *other*?

If Jesus Christ be really God and man united in one person, what reason can be assigned why the things which he said and did should not be ascribed to his complex person? But did not Jesus Christ say—“Of that day and hour knoweth no *one* but the Father only.” “My Father is greater than I.” “Of mine own self I can do nothing.” “The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.” “The words that I speak, I speak not of myself.” “I am not come of myself.” “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” “My soul is troubled.” “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” Did not Jesus

Christ say these things of his *whole person* ? But if he were God and man united, could he have said that he did not know what his Father knew ? that his Father was greater than himself ? that of his own self he could do nothing ? that his soul was exceeding sorrowful, &c. ? On the supposition that his person consisted as well of *essential divinity*, as of humanity, his *person* must have known every thing his Father knew—his *person* could not have been less than the person of his Father—he could have done every thing with his own underived and independent power—and *his person* must have been incapable I should think of sorrow and of suffering. Should it be said that in these and similar declarations Christ referred exclusively to his human nature ; by what authority, I would ask, is this asserted ? Did Christ ever say, or even *intimate* that this was the case ? I do not recollect that he ever speaks of himself as other than *one simple person*, or that he ever intimates that he possessed more than *one uncompounded intelligent nature*. He speaks of *his soul* and *spirit*, not as complex, but as simple and uncompounded ; and as connected with flesh and bones, as is the case with other simple and uncompounded souls or spirits. But if Christ referred in the above declarations, to but *one*, and to the lowest of his supposed natures, he could not have made them with reference to his *supposed person* ; for this person possessed *two natures*, which two natures are *essential* to the person. This consequence, must, I think, be admitted. But should it be urged that Christ might have said the things under consideration with reference to his person, although he meant only his human nature, I have then to ask—Is it not very strange that in speaking of *himself* he should refer to a *part* of himself *only*, and to that part, which, in comparison with the other part of himself, is as it were *nothing*—less than a ray of light when compared with the immense body of the sun—less than an atom, when compared with the universe ! Is it not, Sir, very strange, is it not, indeed, utterly unaccountable, that Jesus Christ should, in this manner, speak of himself to his disciples and to the multitude of his hearers ? I see not how it can reasonably be admitted that THE TRUTH, in whom there was no guile, should uniformly or even generally, in speaking of *himself*, his *ownself*, have reference *only to an infinitely minute part* of himself ? Could he have thus used the figure termed *synecdoche* without *deceiving* his hearers ? I know not that we have any evidence, that either his disciples or others supposed that he used it. Why then should not *we* consider him, when speaking of himself, as having used plain and intelligible language, importing his *whole self* ?

If two natures, divine and human, composed the person of Jesus Christ, I have once more to ask, whether these two natures constituted the *whole* of his character, existence, or being? If so, must not his supposed union with the Father and the Spirit, so as to constitute one God, be wholly unfounded? But if the two supposed natures are *not* to be considered as constituting the whole character, existence, or being of Christ, will it not be difficult, if not impossible to conceive what his character, existence, or being is? Jesus Christ, according to Dr. Worcester, is a "*being*" possessed of all divine attributes, and is therefore God. To this being two other beings, possessed of all divine attributes, and therefore each God, are united. And these Three constitute one God. Must not this one God then possess three sets of all divine attributes? If not, where is the ground for the supposition that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three distinct co-equal persons, agents or beings? Besides, must not the "Sacred Three" be equally united to man, or human nature? I see not but the Father and the Spirit must have been as really incarnate as the Son, and that they must have done and suffered every thing which was done and suffered by the Son. Moreover, as christians are *one* with Christ, as Christ is *one* with the Father—as they are *one* both *in* the Father, and *in* the Son, why must it not be admitted, on Dr. Worcester's principles, that the *second person* in the Trinity is as truly, and in the *same sense*, united to all *christians* or *good men*, as he is to the *man Christ Jesus*? And as the second person in the Trinity is so united to the other persons as to constitute one God, must not the union so embrace all christians or good men as to include them in the Godhead?

These queries, Sir, I make not with the view needlessly to embarrass the subject, or perplex your mind. My object is to state the difficulties which the supposed union of two infinitely discrepant natures in the person of Christ present to my view, with the hope to have them removed. If you, Sir, can fairly and satisfactorily remove them, you will, in doing it, confer upon me, and many others, a very high obligation, which will very cheerfully be acknowledged. But until these difficulties shall be removed, I must think it the safer part to consider whatever Jesus Christ says of himself, and whatever is said respecting him, in the volume of revelation, as relating to his *whole person*, consisting of *one uncompounded intellectual nature*, connected with, or united to a human body; or as made "*like* unto his brethren." If the scripture teaches a different doctrine, most ardently do I desire to discover it—most gladly would I embrace it. The text in Phil. ii. 4, &c. "*Who*

being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, &c.” does not, I should think, admit of a construction, which will justify the belief, that God and man compose one person, or one Christ. If what is said in this passage relate to Jesus Christ as *God*, then Jesus Christ, *as God*, “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” If it relate to Jesus Christ as man, then “every knee is to bow at his name, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue is to confess” that *the man* Christ Jesus “*is Lord*.” But if what is said in this passage relate to the complex character or person of Christ, then his *divinity* as well as *humanity* became obedient, suffered and died; and his *humanity* as well as *divinity* is an object of worship. If, however, I am too peremptory in these assertions, I am willing that they should be so modified as to express only my own opinion. But notwithstanding the passage does not seem to admit of a construction favourable to Dr. W.’s hypothesis, yet I readily grant that its exact import may not easily be ascertained. I will, however, venture to suggest whether the following construction is not fairly admissible, and probably correct—“Christ, although he was or had been in the form or likeness of God, *was not eager in retaining that form or likeness*, but on the contrary, humbled or emptied himself, &c.” If Jesus Christ had been strictly equal with God, or possessed of all divine attributes, how could he have humbled or *emptied himself*? Is not the supposition too extravagant to claim rational belief? Of this some of the most eminent Trinitarian writers have been aware, and have accordingly given to the passage a construction similar to that which I have suggested.

Letter 2, p. 7, Dr. Worcester observes that “the highest holy creature would shudder at the ascription to him of the names, and titles, and honours ascribed to Jesus Christ.” This, Sir, is a very strong expression, and calculated to make a very strong impression on the minds of many of its readers; and such an impression as ought not to be made. Whatever the Doctor might have intended by it, its most obvious import seems to be, that all holy created beings, however dignified, would reject with horror the names, titles, and honours, *generally*, which are ascribed to Christ, were they ascribed to themselves; that these names, titles, and honours are not ascribed to any created being; and therefore, that Christ must be self-existent. If the Doctor did not mean to be thus understood, he expressed himself, I think, very unguardedly. But if he did mean to be thus understood, I know not how to account for it, as the names, &c. *generally*, which are ascribed to

Christ, are in fact ascribed also to holy created beings. I must suppose, therefore, that Dr. W. must have intended, exclusively, the highest and most sacred names and titles which are ascribed to Christ. But is it a fact that *these* are not ascribed to created beings? Are the names and titles, *Holy One, Deliverer, Saviour, High Priest, Judge, Governor, Leader, Ruler, King, King of kings, Lord, Emanuel, God, Jehovah, (Aleim,)* ascribed to Christ? But are they not ascribed also to created beings? According to Dr. Worcester it seems they are not. Yet I must be permitted on the *authority of scripture*, to believe and say, that they *really are ascribed to created and holy beings*. Now since the most sacred names and titles which are ascribed to Jesus Christ, are ascribed also to angels and men, what proof does their being ascribed to Jesus Christ afford in support of his supreme divinity? The argument drawn from this circumstance, must appear, I should think, to every attentive and unbiassed mind extremely inconclusive. And when it is considered that the names and titles, *generally*, which are ascribed to Jesus Christ, are *in fact* ascribed also to created beings, what are we to think of the Doctor's assertion, "that the highest holy creature would shudder at the ascription to him of those names and titles?" What he means by this unfounded assertion, I neither know, nor can I form any satisfactory conjecture. The assertion has excited in me, I confess, no common surprise. Nor is this surprise in any degree diminished by the consideration that Dr. W. without "shuddering," and, I presume, without remonstance, *suffers, habitually suffers, one of the most sacred and venerable names or titles of the Supreme Jehovah to be ascribed to himself*. "REVEREND IS HIS NAME." But why does he not "shudder" at this ascription? Is it because he is *not* a "*holy creature*?" But this, my dear Sir, I would by no means insinuate. Nor would I be understood, in any thing I have said, as treating Dr. W. disrespectfully. This has been far from my design. I would, however, be understood as strongly insinuating that he has made a very incorrect and exceptionable assertion, and that he has "condemned himself in that thing which he alloweth" to be *shudderingly* impious. I am willing to be understood as suggesting also, whether the title *Reverend* is not of too sacred an import to be ascribed, in the manner it is, to the professedly un aspiring and humble ministers of the meek and humble Jesus?

If "the highest holy creature" does *not* shudder at the ascription to him of *the names and titles* ascribed to *Jesus Christ*, I can see no reason why he should shudder at the ascription to him of the "*honours*" ascribed to Jesus

Christ ; for the honours ascribed to him, consist, in part, in the ascription of high and sacred names and titles ; and the other honours which are paid to him are “ *to the glory of God the Father.*” But would the highest holy creature shudder at honours ascribed to him, which ultimately terminate upon the *one Supreme* ? Such honours have always been given to holy creatures. And although they are not equal to those which are to be given to Jesus Christ, yet are they not similar in *kmd* ? I pray you, Sir, to review this subject with much attention, and then decide whether Dr. W. is to be justified in his strong, and peremptory, and unqualified assertion.

Letter 3, p. 16, Dr. Worcester asks, “ Is it credible, that in a divine revelation, a principal object of which is to guard mankind against *idolatry* ; and to teach them the true worship, the representations are such as to make the great body of christians in every age *idolaters*—as the fact certainly is, if Christ is not truly God ?” This question is highly interesting, and its peremptory decision by the Dr. has a strong claim to an awakened and most serious attention. Although it is not to be admitted, that, in the “ divine revelation, the representations are such as to *make* the great body of christians” in *any age* “ *idolaters*,” yet it cannot reasonably be denied, perhaps, that the great body of christians have been idolaters from about the close of the fifth century, in every successive period, down to the present time. During the lapse of nearly a thousand years, scarcely any but *christian idolaters* were to be found till the memorable era of the REFORMATION, through the instrumentality of Luther, Calvin, and other worthies, who distinguished themselves in that great and noble achievement. The *Waldenses* and *Albigenses* did not indeed “ bow the knee to the image of Baal.” And it is worthy of remark that these *true worshippers* of God were deemed as *hereticks*, and as such were most inhumanly persecuted, because they dissented from the generally received *orthodox faith*. Nor is evidence wanting that many, if not the most of them, were *dissenters from the doctrine of the Trinity*. From the period of the reformation to the present time, the great body, or the majority of christians, have been idolatrous in their worship, if the papal or catholic religion is to be considered as idolatry. But are we to infer from this melancholy fact that the “ representations in the Bible,” are such as to *make* men idolaters ? This inference, according to Dr. W.’s insinuation, seems but natural. Yet I cannot but think that the idolatry of the great body of christians is to be otherwise accounted for. Is it not, Sir, to be traced up to human creeds and formularies, and to their indiscreet and ambitious authors, as an important if not a principal occasion ?

Whether the great body of christians in the *protestant* world are idolaters, I pretend not positively to decide. But if their worship, in fact, be idolatrous, it is not to be imputed, I am fully persuaded, to any representations in the Bible; for these representations very strongly “guard mankind against *idolatry*.” They seem very clearly to exhibit to our view the Supreme God as *One*, to the exclusion of *all others*—as *one uncompounded person, being, or agent*. These representations seem also clearly to teach us that this one God, *the Father of Jesus Christ*, the Father of all, is the *alone object of supreme worship*. Indeed Jesus Christ himself worshipped him as such, “leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.” And this example he enforced by precept. He taught to pray to the Father, and assured us that *the true worshippers* worship HIM in spirit and in truth. Nor have we, I conceive, any approved example in scripture of supreme worship paid to any other person, being or agent, than to the one God, *even the Father*. But if the Father *alone* is the true God, and to *be worshipped as such*, does it certainly follow that the great body of protestant christians are idolaters? According to Dr. W.’s theory, this conclusion seems inevitable. This, indeed, he says “is *certain*, if Jesus Christ is not truly God.” By the great body of christians I understand him to mean *protestant Trinitarians*. These christians do not acknowledge “the Father *alone* to be the Supreme God.” But they worship “*The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*.” If the Son, therefore, is not truly God, they are, if we may believe Dr. W. “*idolaters*.” It is distinctly to be noticed that he speaks of Jesus Christ as a *being*, an *agent*, as *God*—as *truly God*, in *distinction* from the *Father*, and as equal to the Father. Now if Dr. W. and other Trinitarians, besides worshipping the Father, do really worship Jesus Christ as a being, as God, equal to the Father, I see not, I confess, but “the fact *certainly* is,” that they are “idolaters,” or that they equally worship two equal Gods. And if they, in *like manner*, worship the Holy Ghost, then the fact, it seems, *certainly* is, that they equally worship three equal Gods. If these conclusions do not unavoidably result from the Doctor’s statements, most ardently do I wish to be convinced that they do not. I am not unaware, however, that the Doctor supposes that these three beings, agents, or Gods, are in some mysterious way so united as to constitute but one God. But does he suppose that this one God is but one being, and possessed of but one set or class of infinite perfections? If this be his supposition, and if he and other Trinitarians worship this one God, or being, only as the supreme object of worship, I do not see but they

worship precisely the same God, as Unitarians profess to worship. But as the Doctor can by no means admit this to be the fact, *who*, or *what*, I would ask, is the *object* of Trinitarian worship? Is this object a supposed *essence* common to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? If so, I would further ask, whether this essence is to be distinguished from person, or personality? If so, and if the essence is the object of worship, then the persons to whom the essence belongs are to be excluded from divine worship. But should this be denied, then I have to ask, whether there must not be *four objects of worship in the Godhead*? If the *essence* which is common to the Three Persons is to be worshipped, and if the *Persons* themselves are also to be worshipped, can it consistently be denied that christians have four objects of divine worship? I hope, Sir, that you will not consider these queries as trifling, or captious, or as irrelevant to the subject under review. I certainly consider them as pertinent and strongly requiring very serious attention, and plain and unequivocal answers.

I hope, Sir, that I have said nothing on this subject which you will construe into a charge against Trinitarians of idolatry. I would be understood as saying only, that according to what Dr. Worcester *says*, they seem to be chargeable with idolatrous worship. Yet notwithstanding I thus speak, it is my belief that they are not designedly idolatrous in their worship, and my devout wish, that they may, in no degree, be chargeable with the guilt of such worship. Dr. W. has expressed himself on this subject, as he is apt to do on other subjects, with too much decision. "If Jesus Christ is *not* truly God," I am not prepared with the Dr. peremptorily to say, "that the great body of christians are idolaters;" for they appear to me seldom if ever to worship Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit, as essentially divine persons. The most zealous Trinitarians with whom I have united in worship, disclaim generally, in their prayers, if their expressions are intelligible, the worship both of *the Son* and *Spirit*. They very devoutly thank God the Father for having sent his Son into the world to die for sinners, and implore pardon of sin in his name, through him, or for his sake. They also supplicate God, the Father, that he would mercifully pour out his Spirit to sanctify the heart, and to enliven its languid affections. Thus they *commonly* pray, and address their petitions to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. But in doing this, are we to understand them as implying that the *Father* is *three persons*, or that the *Son* had a joint agency with the Father in *sending himself* to die for sinners? or as supplicating the Son, as well as the Father, that *the Son*

with the Father, would grant pardon *through himself* (the Son) or *for his own sake*? Or when they pray the Father to pour out his Spirit, &c. would they be understood as praying to *the Spirit*, as a distinct person, that *he* would, in connexion with the Father, *pour out himself*? If they would be thus understood, their expressions are certainly very illy adapted to their design. It is believed, however, that they are not thus understood by *their hearers in general*, whatever *they* may intend. Nor can I conceive that men of serious thought and reflection will pretend, that when they address the *Father*, as above stated, they either design, or wish to be understood as addressing *the Son* and *the Holy Spirit*. What then does Dr. W. mean—what *can* he mean when he says, “We worship the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?” I cannot tell, nor can I satisfactorily conjecture what he means. If in these expressions he himself is able to discover any distinct and intelligible meaning, he would very highly gratify many serious and inquiring christians, as well Trinitarian, as Unitarian, by an intelligible disclosure of it.

But notwithstanding Trinitarian christians habitually make Unitarian prayers, they sometimes, it is to be admitted, deviate from their general practice. When they pray *theoretically*, or *doctrinally*, or in a *controversial manner*, they address a *triune God* in a few petitions, and then *exclusively* address but *one of the persons*, either the Father, Son or Spirit; but almost invariably the Father. The consistency of this I cannot discover. Indeed such prayers seem to me very inconsistent. Nor is it impossible that they are sometimes made with a spirit not so devotional as the solemn subject requires. I have sometimes, on public occasions, heard prayers of this description, with heart-felt grief, not so much however on account of the expressions used in them, as on account of the apparent indevout and unhallowed spirit with which they were uttered. Were Trinitarian christians more thoroughly to revolve this subject in their minds, I cannot but think they would entirely abandon this manner of praying; and that instead of using unscriptural ascriptions or doxologies, they would give a practical preference to those prescribed by *the Spirit of inspiration*. Is it not very greatly to be lamented that a *flagrant departure*, in prayer, from *the scriptural “form of sound words,”* should be considered as indicative of *soundness in the faith* once delivered to the saints, and that an *adherence to that most perfect form* should be condemned as expressive of *heresy*? Have we not much reason to suspect the correctness of that theory.

which, rejecting the pure words of the gospel given by the inspiration of God, calls to its aid words of man's invention, and words too which are neither explained, nor, it is believed, capable of being explained? Are christian ministers, or private christians, to be praised in this? I praise them not. And shall I say too much if I add, "these things ought not so to be."

Letter 1, pp. 28, 35, Dr. Worcester, addressing Mr. Channing, observes "The God whom you worship is different from ours." "The differences which exist between the Unitarians and the orthodox christians are certainly of a nature, to demand the most serious and earnest attention."—That this attention ought to be given to the differences which exist between these denominations of christians, and particularly in relation to the one God, I readily admit. And most ardently do I wish that this subject of difference between them might be attended to by both parties, not only in a "most serious and earnest manner," but with minds free from all unreasonable prepossessions—fully open to conviction, and with all the meekness of wisdom. If, as Dr. W. says, the God whom Unitarians worship be different from the God whom Trinitarians worship, the difference ought distinctly to be marked out, that it might be clearly seen and known of all men. Unitarians professedly worship but one Supreme God as an object of supreme worship. But do Trinitarians worship more than one Supreme God? To this one God Unitarians ascribe self-existence, independence and all divine and infinite perfection, both natural and moral. But do Trinitarians ascribe more than this to their God? In their prayers Unitarians hope "through Christ to have access by one Spirit unto the Father." They perform their devotions "in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by him." And to do this acceptably, they profess to believe that they must be under the guidance and sanctifying influence of the Spirit of God. But do not Trinitarians hope to have access to the Father *through Christ*, and *by the Spirit*? Do they not generally pray to the Father in *the name* of the Lord Jesus, and *by him* give thanks to the Father? And do they not believe that in order to do this acceptably, they must be under the *guidance and sanctifying influence of God's Spirit*? What then is the difference between the God whom Unitarians worship, and the God whom Trinitarians worship? And what is the difference between them with respect to the mode or manner in which they perform divine worship? I am aware indeed that Trinitarian christians do sometimes in their worship of God use expressions which seem to import the existence of three

co-equal Gods. But as they explicitly disclaim the worship of more Gods than one, may not the one God whom they profess to worship be essentially the same as the one God whom Unitarians profess to worship? I wish to believe that this is the real fact, nor can I but indulge the hope that the difference between them, as to worship, is rather *seeming* than *real*. But should a real difference in opinion between them exist as to the *mode* of the existence of the one God, can this difference be of any serious importance? Are we required to make the mode of the divine existence an article of faith? Or can we by searching find out what this mode is? Is it not the part then of christian modesty and prudence to leave with God "the secret things," and make it our main object suitably to improve "those which are revealed?"

In this view of the subject, I would ask whether such difference really exists "between the Unitarians and the orthodox christians" in relation to the character of God, or of Jesus Christ, as to make it sinful or even improper to either denomination to commune with the other, either at the Lord's table, or in any act of devotion, or worship? To decide this question as it ought to be decided, may in some cases, be difficult. Dr. Worcester, however, if I understand him, repeatedly gives it as his opinion in his Letters, particularly, Letter 2, p. 39, that communion between Unitarian and Trinitarian christians is generally inadmissible. Speaking of a Trinitarian church, "in the act of celebrating the death of the Lord Jesus at his table," he observes—"They unite in worshipping the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; in adoring Christ as their almighty Saviour, and gratefully ascribing the forgiveness of their sins, &c. entirely to his propitiatory sacrifice; and in devoutly acknowledging the Holy Spirit, as their Sanctifier, and Comforter, and praising him as the efficient Producer in them of all holy affections and consolations." "Can a Unitarian, (the Doctor then asks) who denies all these doctrines, have communion with the church in this solemn and interesting scene? Must it not be to him a scene of abominable idolatry; a most delusive and flagitious perversion of the sacred institution? In regard to the whole, the doctrine and the worship founded upon them, is he not an unbeliever?" This passage, Sir, is evidently designed to exhibit a contrast between the Unitarian and the Trinitarian theory and worship in a very strong point of light. But whether the contrast is exhibited in a *just point of light*, I will not venture to decide, as I do not sufficiently understand what is the true character of the Trinitarian theory and worship. But if from this contrast it is fairly to be inferred, that the Trinitarian celebration of the sacra-

mental supper, must be to the Unitarian "a scene of abominable idolatry ; a most delusive and flagitious perversion of the sacred institution," he could not, it is true, be desirous of communing with a Trinitarian church. Nor could he with propriety do it. But does the Unitarian christian view the "scene" as abominable idolatry? However the subject may appear to individual christians of that denomination, I am far from believing that the great body of them suppose that Trinitarians, in celebrating the Lord's supper, are either chargeable with *abominable idolatry*, or that they are guilty of a *flagitious perversion* of the sacred institution. They believe, indeed, that Trinitarians are incorrect in their *views* of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that they are sometimes still more incorrect in their *expressions*. The passage above quoted furnishes, I think, striking evidence of the truth of this remark. "In celebrating the death of the Lord Jesus at his table," Dr. W. observes, that a Trinitarian Church "adore Christ as their almighty Saviour." But what does he mean by *Christ*? The *triune God*? This, it is presumed, he will not admit, unless he believes that the Triune God made "a propitiatory sacrifice" by dying on the cross? Does he mean then that Christ, the second person in the Trinity, is *the Almighty Saviour*? But will he admit that there are two or more Almighty Saviours? If not, must not Christ be *the* almighty Saviour, exclusively of the Father and the Holy Spirit? In "acknowledging the Holy Spirit as their Sanctifier and Comforter," does the Doctor mean to convey the idea that the Holy Spirit, as a person distinct from the Father, is their Sanctifier and Comforter? But how is this consistent with saints being "sanctified, and wholly sanctified by God the Father?" Or how is it consistent with the declarations of the inspired apostle, that "God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the God of *all* comfort;" that he "comforteth us in *all* our tribulations," that he is "the God of *consolation*," and "giveth *everlasting* consolation." Besides, if the Holy Spirit, as a distinct person, is to be "praised as the efficient Producer of *all* holy affections," does it not seem that no praise is due to the Father, who, *the scriptures* assure us, "*worketh* in us both to will and do of *his good pleasure*," "makes us perfect in every good work to do his will, working that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ?" But is no praise due to God, the Father, as the "Producer of *all* holy affections"—and as that GREAT EFFICIENT, "who *worketh all in all*?" Perhaps, however, you will say that the Doctor, by *Holy Spirit*, means the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. If this be the fact, why has he not told us so? But it is hardly to

be supposed, that this is his meaning, and especially as he seems to consider the terms *Sanctifier* and *Comforter* as appropriate to the Spirit, and distinguishes the worship of the Spirit from that of the Father and of the Son. But notwithstanding he seems to represent "the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" as three distinct beings, or Gods, to whom Trinitarians give supreme worship; yet I cannot think that he would be understood as believing in, or pleading for a worship which is "abominable idolatry." Nor can I believe that reflecting christians of any denomination think so. But what the Doctor does mean I pretend not to determine. His expressions are calculated to produce much indistinctness and confusion of thought, and such practical results, I fear, as neither scripture nor sober reason will justify. Yet I am not prepared to say that either scripture or sober reason will justify any description of Unitarian christians in refusing to commune with a Trinitarian church, "in the act of celebrating the death of the Lord Jesus at his table." Nor do I think that Unitarians, generally, would decline such communion, on any inviting occasion. I have indeed supposed that christians of this description, with very few exceptions, were willing and even desirous to maintain christian communion even in the most solemn acts of religion, with their Trinitarian brethren. And this, I conceive, they can consistently do so long as these their christian brethren profess to believe in, and to worship but one Supreme God. Their attachment to the use of the expression *Trinity in Unity*, and other expressions which may be thought equally exceptionable, and which may involve incorrect and misleading ideas, does not, I think, afford sufficient ground to any for withdrawing from communion with them, since they solemnly disclaim the doctrine of polytheism.

In the Letter and page last quoted, Dr. Worcester invites his readers to "*change the scene.*" Here he describes a *Unitarian Church* "at the table of the holy supper. They refuse, (he observes) to worship the Son and the Holy Ghost; they deny the divinity and atonement of Jesus Christ, and remember him only as a good man, who 'suffered and died in the best of causes,' but 'in the occasion and manner of whose death there was nothing very different from that of others, who suffered and died after him in the same cause, &c.'" "What (asks the Dr.) has an orthodox christian to do with such a communion? Can he join in divesting his adored Saviour of his glory—in profaning the sacred memorial of his dying love—in making '*his blood an unholy thing?*'" On reading this passage the first question arising in my mind is, whether Dr. W. would be understood as giving a fair and "un-

varnished" representation of "a church of Unitarians, (say if you please of low Unitarians") in any of the New-England States? If so, I cannot but think him blameable; as I strongly suspect that a Unitarian church, answering to his description, does not exist either in the New-England States, or in any State in the Union. It is indeed very questionable whether a church in Christendom is to be found, whose character is justly delineated in the above quotation. Although the Doctor is correct in saying of Unitarians that "they refuse to worship the Son and Holy Spirit," if by this he means that they do not worship Jesus Christ as God, *equal* to the Father, nor the Holy Spirit as God, *distinct* from the Father; yet I do not think him justifiable in his unqualified assertion. No Unitarian, I presume, refuses to worship Jesus Christ as the Son of God—as the Messiah, or as a person whom God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. Nor do Unitarians, it is presumed, refuse to worship the Holy Spirit as God, although they do not worship him as *another* or *distinct person* from God. "God is a Spirit"—a Holy Spirit—the Holy Spirit. As such, Unitarians worship Him. Indeed the worship of God necessarily involves the worship of his Spirit, or Himself as a Spirit, or that Holy Spirit which fills immensity. How then can Dr. W. be justified in his decisive and unqualified declaration, that a church of Unitarians, at the table of the holy supper, refuse to worship the Son, and the Holy Ghost? And by what authority does he represent them as *profaning* the sacred memorial of Christ's dying love, and in making "*his blood an unholy thing!*" It is much to be lamented that a man of Doctor Worcester's respectability and influence should say these things. They *do* appear to me highly incorrect, and calculated to produce effects baleful to the christian temper and to christian practice. Most fervently do I hope that the Doctor will very seriously review what he has written, that if his pen has been misguided, he may be convinced of it, and promptly correct its errors.

Can it be right, my dear Sir, in Trinitarian churches, to deny "children's bread" to their Unitarian brethren, and cast them out of their community, as "unbelievers," when they professedly believe in, and worship Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God? and when they acknowledge and worship the ONE GOD as the Holy and Supreme Spirit? I am strongly apprehensive that in doing this they "walk not charitably;" and that they are far from rendering to God an acceptable service, and securing the approbation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Such conduct in the estimation of Dr.'s Goldridge and Watts, and many others of like charac-

ter, was, in the highest degree, censurable. Dr. Doddridge in particular would "sooner have given up his place and sacrificed his life," than have countenanced an attempt in some of his church, to excommunicate, or suspend from communion, one of the members who was a *Socinian*. But did these eminently enlightened and holy men possess a smaller portion of the Spirit of Christ, or less christian zeal in the cause of *pure and undefiled religion*, than is possessed by those christian ministers of the present day, who exclude from their communion their brethren, who do not think it right to use their peculiar and *unscriptural expressions*, respecting the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? Happy were it for our churches, if a greater number of Doddridges and Wattses were to be found, to heal the breaches which unhappily exist among christians of different denominations.

But while it is to be lamented that christian ministers and churches, in so many instances, set at nought each other, is not the *manner* in which they too often do this, much more to be lamented? Have not instances occurred of brother rejecting brother, in violation of the express precepts of Jesus Christ? Have not instances occurred of suspension and excommunication of private members of churches, in a manner, which the disciplinary laws of Christ's kingdom do not admit? And are not these unjustifiable things and proceedings to be traced, in some measure, at least, to the letters of Dr. Worcester and similar publications? This suggestion certainly demands a very serious and interested consideration.—Lord of compassion! may it please thee to rectify the intellectual and moral errors of contending christians, and so to unite them in love, that they may happily realize "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." But if a dividing and denunciatory spirit and system of operation must still exist, O let them be instrumental to the furtherance of the uncorrupted and precious truths of the gospel of thy dear Son.

Letter 2, pp. 26, 27, Dr. Worcester supposes it to be "vastly important, that people should 'learn the distinction between Trinitarianism and Unitarianism;'" but that it is "laboured assiduously," on the part of Unitarians, "to conceal the points of difference between the two denominations," and to make the impression that "these points are few and of very little importance." "In opposition to this system of concealment," he observes, "I have thought it right and important to endeavour a developement, and to lay the difference be-

tween us (Trinitarians and Unitarians) open to the public in their true light. On our part we have no dread of this ; no dread of a clear and full development. It has long been our earnest desire, that your sentiments as well as ours might be known, and that all christians and all people might well understand the points on which you differ from us. On this account we devoutly rejoice that the subject has been brought before the public.”—These passages require the serious attention of the christian community at large, and particularly the attention of christian ministers.—That there is a “distinction between Trinitarianism and Unitarianism,” is not to be disguised. But whether the distinction is so great as Dr. W. seems to suppose, I am not prepared to admit. I really hope that the difference between the two systems is rather *circumstantial*, than *radical*. Notwithstanding Dr. W. has given a description of the doctrine of the Trinity which seems very strongly to imply the existence of three distinct Gods, equal in power and glory ; yet he explicitly declares his belief in the existence of but one Supreme God. But do not Unitarians fully believe in the existence of but one Supreme God ? and do they not as well as Dr. W. ascribe to him “all divine attributes ?” To Jesus Christ the Dr. does not hesitate to apply the name *man* as well as that of God. Nor do Unitarians hesitate to do the same. The Dr. believes that the Holy Spirit is God possessed of “all divine attributes.” But do not Unitarians believe this ? Is the difference then, between the Trinitarian and the Unitarian theory essential ? If so, it is indeed “vastly important that people should learn it.” But how this is to be effected, is not easy to be determined. It is extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to draw a correct line of distinction between the two theories. This arises partly from the circumstance that the Trinitarian theory is subject to no inconsiderable mutations ; partly from the circumstance that Trinitarians differ widely in opinion among themselves ; and partly to the circumstance that they do not clearly explain the words and phrases they use in reference to their diversified theory. These things considered, it is hardly to be expected that a line of distinction will soon be clearly and satisfactorily marked between Trinitarianism and Unitarianism. But if it be practicable, most sincerely do I hope, that the difficult task will be undertaken by some one who is competent to its accomplishment.

If, as Dr. Worcester supposes, Unitarians labour assiduously “to conceal the points of difference” between themselves and Trinitarians, it is much to be lamented.

Nor shall I appear as their apologist. Concealment in matters of a religious nature, and especially in those which are highly important, I consider as very inconsistent with that frank and ingenuous spirit which christianity as well inspires, as inculcates. The children of light do not seek the covert of darkness. Liberated from bondage, and their "feet set in a large room," they will nobly disdain to do things "in a corner." Although not with ostentation, yet with unshrinking intrepidity, they will, without disguise, proclaim their sentiments upon the house top. But whether this be the character of Unitarians generally, my limited acquaintance with them, and with their publications, does not allow me to decide. Such of their publications, however, as I have read, have, with very few, if any exceptions, exhibited to my view *very strong features of artless simplicity and honest frankness*. But if these "fair speeches," are "the slight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive," it is my earnest hope that Dr. W. may have the adroitness as well as disposition to expose their guile and the hidden things of their dishonesty; and "to lay the differences between them and Trinitarians in their true light." I have "no dread of a clear and full developement" of its features. It is indeed my wish that the developement might be made, in a manner much more clear and full than it has been made by the pen of Dr. W. Nor is it less my wish that the *Trinitarian* theory might be clearly and fully developed; and that this developement might be seen, and read, and understood by all men. Such an event would probably be the means of settling the bewildering controversy which has so long, and so unhappily existed between Trinitarian and Unitarian writers. But so long as the Trinitarian theory assumes so many different shapes, and remains veiled in impervious mystery, it is not to be expected that the collision of controversy will strike out many sparks of light, or make much advance towards a desirable termination. Yet *something* may be done to these purposes. Something indeed has already been done. And much more remains to be done to elucidate the subject, that inquirers might be able to understand it, and make up their minds in relation to it. In the hope that the time is not far distant when this will happily be the case, I "devoutly rejoice" with Dr. W. "that the subject has been brought before the public." And I will add—it is my hope that it will *continue* before the public, until "people shall learn the distinction between Trinitarianism and Unitarianism." *This distinction*, I am persuaded, *is yet to be learned* by the great body of christians, if not by the great body of christian ministers.—I am very

sorry, my dear Sir, to make this remark, as it seems to imply a charge of criminal inattention and ignorance. But when I find *by actual communications* from those “who are set for the defence of the Gospel,” that one is ignorant that the “Trinitarian theory admits that Christ’s inferior nature or human soul began to exist in the reign of Augustus Cesar”—that another supposes that the “three persons in the Godhead are nothing else than three cardinal perfections or attributes of the one God,” and a third, that these persons are only “three modes of the Divine Existence”—When I learn these, and other things of like nature, from “masters in Israel,” who are distinguished for reputed orthodoxy, and for their influence on public opinion, I think it right and important, that the above remark should be made. Simply to expose ignorance, and extravagant and unfounded speculations in teachers of religion, is far from my design. My object is to arouse their attention, and to excite them to a serious review, in the light of scripture, of their respective sentiments, and to suggest to christians, generally, the duty and importance of examining the question, “what is truth?” *for themselves*. If ministers of the sanctuary have so little knowledge of “the subject before the public,” it is hardly to be supposed that their hearers will understand it. The fact, I apprehend, is, that *the subject is but very little understood* by “christians and people” generally. I cannot, therefore, but view it important that the subject should continue under discussion until people, generally, shall obtain distinct ideas of it, and shall be able duly to weigh the arguments of writers on the one side and on the other. But while it is my wish that the subject might still be discussed, it is my hope that no one will enter on the discussion without a competent knowledge of it; and that no one who is thus prepared will engage in the difficult task, unless he will pursue it with a spirit of calmness, candor, and brotherly love; and with the view to *instruct*, without producing immoderate excitement; and to *close* rather than to *widen breaches*. Pathetic appeals to the prejudices, the passions and the *fears* of men, instead of having a good tendency, will be likely to produce effects, which, by all reflecting minds, must be ardently deprecated. May God in mercy to his people raise up men of this description in these “troublous times,” and abundantly bless and succeed their endeavours to exhibit the truth as it is in Jesus.

Should the “subject before the public” continue under proper discussion until people shall learn the distinction between Trinitarianism and Unitarianism, they will then be in a situation to judge whether the doctrine of the

Trinity, and the divinity of Christ, are to be received as scriptural verities, or to be rejected as human inventions. At present these doctrines seem to be considered by many as the foundation of the gospel system. Thus, if I understand him, they are considered by Dr. W. Agreeably, he asks, Letter 2, p. 38, "Is it a light thing to reject this doctrine (the doctrine of the Trinity) because it transcends the limited faculties of the human mind, &c."—"If Jesus Christ is truly and essentially divine, is it a light thing to deny his divinity—to refuse to him all divine honours?" In reply to the former of these queries I have to observe in the first place, that I consider it as expressed in a deceptive, and therefore exceptionable manner. The Doctor strongly insinuates that the doctrine of the Trinity is rejected by Unitarians *because it transcends the limited faculties of the human mind*. But is this insinuation well founded? That Dr. W. believes it is, I would not question. But *why* he should believe so, I know not. For myself I can say, that I have never suspected, either from their conversation or written expressions on the subject, that Unitarians reject the doctrine of the Trinity, *because it transcends the faculties of their minds*; nor have I now any suspicion that this is the fact. They reject it, so far as I am able to judge, because they believe it to be *repugnant both to reason and revelation*. I am truly sorry, therefore, that Dr. W. has made the above representation, as it appears to me very unjust, and calculated to make very wrong and hurtful impressions on the minds of many of his readers. Indeed I doubt not that the representation *has* made, and deeply made such impressions, as ought to be effaced. And it is my hope that Dr. W. will be convinced that *he* ought to do every thing in his power to efface them, and that his conviction will produce the desired effect.

The question whether "it is a light thing to reject the *doctrine of the Trinity*," cannot well be answered until that doctrine shall be settled. Many Trinitarians (so called) if not the great body of them have, in all ages of the christian church, rejected the doctrine of the Trinity as held by Dr. W.; *he*, of course, rejects the doctrine as they have held it. Whether *this* is a light thing, the Doctor has not expressed his opinion. Nor has he intelligibly told us, either what the doctrine of the Trinity is, or what is implied in rejecting it. To my mind, at least, he has conveyed no sentiments on these subjects, which when viewed connectedly are intelligible. His statements appear to me so indistinct and ambiguous, that I find myself utterly incompetent to decide upon their meaning. If, by rejecting the Trinity, he means *a denial of the scripture doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, then to reject

the doctrine of the Trinity, must be so far from a *light thing*, that it involves a *denial of the gospel*. But if by rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, he means a *refusal to use unscriptural words and phrases respecting the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, I do think it a *light thing* to reject the doctrine, and a *small thing* to be judged of man's judgment on account of such rejection. Once more—If, by rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, the Doctor means a *denial of the existence of three distinct "beings" or "Gods" possessed of all divine attributes, so united as to constitute one being or God*, then a rejection of the doctrine must be, I think, an *indispensable obligation*.

"If Jesus Christ is truly and essentially divine," as Dr. Worcester believes, it surely cannot be a "light thing to deny his divinity and refuse to him *all* divine honours." Indeed to refuse him *any* divine honours must be considered, even in the most exalted creature, inexcusable delinquency. But if Jesus Christ is *not* "essentially divine"—if he is *not* a "being possessed of all divine attributes," then to give him "all divine honours," must be an invasion of the rights of that being who is possessed of all divine attributes. Or rather must it not be a denial of the existence of such a being? Is there more than ONE BEING who is supremely divine? If not, and if Jesus Christ is this being, no divine honours can be due to that being who is the God and Father of Jesus Christ, for he must be, it should seem, an *imaginary being*. But is this really the case? Does that being whom Jesus Christ acknowledged to be his God and Father, to whom he prayed, and ascribed all divine honours, and to whom he directed us to do the same, exist only in imagination? And instead of ascribing to him all divine honours, are we to ascribe them to his son, his messenger—his anointed? Is it a light thing, my dear Sir, thus to transfer all divine honours from "*the one God, even the Father?*" But Dr. W. will perhaps say that in giving *all* divine honours to the Son, *no* divine honours are withholden from the Father. And this may be satisfactory to his own mind, and to the minds of others. But it is far from being so to mine. If *all* divine attributes belong to Jesus Christ, and if *all* divine honours are to be given to him, how can *any* divine attributes belong to the Father, or how can *any* divine honours be due to him, or to any other person or being? But the Doctor will be prepared to say that "the Father possesses divine attributes, and is therefore God; and that the Son possesses divine attributes, and is therefore God;" and *therefore* divine honours are to be given as well to the Father, as to the Son. Are two Gods, then, to be worshipped? This, I am well aware, will be denied. But if the Father

is God, and the Son is also God ; and if *each* is entitled to divine worship or honours, I cannot see why *two Gods* are not entitled to divine worship or honours. Sensible, however, that the Dr. will not admit this, his theory becomes involved in impenetrable darkness. And vain is my attempt to ascertain what he means by “denying the divinity of Christ, and refusing him all divine honours.” Yet one thing is clear. If “to us there is but *one God, the Father*, of whom are all things,” then it cannot be a light thing to give all divine honours to his Son, Jesus Christ. Is it not the God and Father of Jesus Christ who solemnly declares, “*I am the Lord*, that is my name ; and my glory will I *not give to another* ?” Is he not “the *only wise God*, unto whom” alone is to be ascribed supreme “honour and glory ?” Will he then hold us guiltless, if instead of “giving unto him the honour due to his name,” we have the temerity to give it to another ?

If, in attending to this subject, we shall find that Jesus Christ is not essentially divine, or equal in power and glory to his Father, we not only may with propriety deny to him supreme divinity ; but it must be our indispensable duty to do so. Nor less indispensable must be our obligation to refuse to him the highest divine honours. This, it is presumed, you will readily admit. I think you will admit also that in order to speak of Jesus Christ in a just and *correct manner*, we must speak of him as he spake of himself, and as he is spoken of by inspired writers. And will you not admit again, that we ought to understand the expressions which he, and inspired writers used in reference to himself, *according to their most natural and obvious meaning* ? These things admitted, let us come to the subject of Christ’s character, if possible, with our minds free from prejudice, and fully open to conviction. If I should refer you to several passages of scripture which have already come under review, I shall not think an apology necessary, as it is my object in this place to exhibit in a connected view such things as seem inconsistent with the suppositions that Jesus Christ is God, equal to the Father, and equally entitled to divine worship or honours.

“*There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*” Here the *one God*, and the *one Mediator* seem to be so contrasted as not to admit the supposition that they are one God, or that a strict equality exists between them. As the one God is represented as *entirely distinct* from the one Mediator, does it not seem necessary to infer that this Mediator neither is, nor can be the one God, nor a constituent part of the one God, with whom he mediates in behalf of men ?

Jesus Christ is the "*Son of God*." But does *Son* imply strict equality, and co-existence from eternity with the *Father*, whose Son he is? Is he not called the Son of God, on account of the *peculiar complacency or love* of the Father towards him?—on account of *his miraculous conception*?—on account of his *having been sanctified and set apart* by the Father *to the distinguished office*, for the execution of which he was sent into the world?—on account of *his having been anointed* with the oil of gladness above his fellows?—on account of *his resurrection* from the dead by the power of God?—on account of *his having been highly exalted*, even at the right hand of God?—and on account of *his having been appointed heir of all things*?—If on *these accounts* Christ is to be considered eminently *the Son of God*, does that appellation prove, or even suggest the supposition, that he is either *the Supreme God*, or *equal* to the supreme God?

Jesus Christ speaks of himself as *an ambassador whom his Father sent into the world*. But is *an ambassador* the same as his sovereign, or equal to him in dignity? Does not *sending* imply a *sender* and a *sent*? But does not the act or power of sending imply *superiority in him who sends*, over *him who is sent by him*?

Jesus Christ, has expressly assured us that he came down from heaven *not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him*. Does not this declaration teach us that Christ possessed a will distinct from that of his Father? How then could he be one God with his Father? Can *one God* be supposed to possess *two distinct numerical wills*? Besides, if Jesus Christ did not do his own will, nor "please himself," but always did the will of his Father, and the things which were pleasing to him, does it not seem that he must be inferior to, as well as distinct from the Father?

Jesus Christ, instead of ascribing the miracles which he performed to his own independent power, *ascribes them to the operation of his Father, the Spirit of his Father, or the Holy Spirit*. It was the Father in him that did the works. It was by the Spirit or finger of God that he cast out demons. Now if Jesus Christ *did not* work miracles *by his own power*, but by power derived from the Father, or if it were the *Father in him* who wrought them, can it reasonably be supposed that he is either one God with the Father, or equal to the Father?

The *doctrines* which Christ taught he has told us *were not his own, but his Father's who sent him*. Here I would ask—If Jesus Christ is one God with his Father, or equal to his Father, could he with any propriety have said that the doctrines which he taught were *not his*, or that he was not

the original author of them? Were he the same with, or equal to his Father, must not the doctrines which he taught have been as truly his, as his Father's?

Jesus Christ has taught us to believe that *he received commands from his Father, and that he unreservedly obeyed them*. But if he were one God with his Father, must he not have *received* commands as well *from himself* as from his Father? And must he not have *obeyed himself* as well as his Father? Are these incongruities to be received as sober, and scriptural, and fundamental truths?

Does not *prayer imply inferiority and dependence in the person praying, with respect to the person to whom the prayer is addressed?* But *Jesus Christ habitually prayed to his Father*, expressing dependence on him and obligation to him, and supplicating his aid and support. How is this consistent with the supposition that he is an independent being, or equal to his Father?

Jesus Christ is styled in scripture *the image of God, of the invisible God*. Can he then be the Supreme and invisible God? As an image cannot be the image of itself, so it seems impossible that Jesus Christ should be the image of God, and yet that very God of whom he is the image, or a component part of him. The supposition that the *image of God is God himself*, or the essence of God, seems to me too extravagant to admit of sober belief. And the supposition that if Jesus Christ were not "very God," he would be represented as *the image of the image of God*, is too preposterous to require a serious refutation. "It is pitiful—wondrous pitiful" that an enlightened christian assembly should hear from the pulpit, and with approbation, a remark which so strikingly resembles "the umbrageous shadow of a shade."

Jesus Christ is *the apostle and high priest of our profession, who was faithful to him that appointed him*. Here it is pertinent to observe that it is the office of a priest to minister in holy things, and to transact for men with God—to intercede for them, &c. Christ as priest, as high priest, came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. To this office he was appointed by his Father, to whom he was faithful in the discharge of it. But are *any of these things incident to the Supreme God?* Is the Supreme God a priest to any being? Does he perform a ministry, or make intercession to any being in behalf of others? Could he have been appointed to the office of high priest by any other being, or have been obedient to any other being, in the discharge of that office? How then can Jesus Christ be the Supreme God, or equal to, or one with the Supreme God?

Jesus Christ, while on earth, *suffered, being tempted. He was in all points tempted like as we are. He was grievously tempted of the devil.* But did these things ever happen to the blessed God? Is it not indeed impossible that he should be subject to temptation, from any influence, agency, or circumstance whatever, either within or without himself? That this is impossible we have the unequivocal testimony of an inspired apostle. "*God cannot be tempted with evil.*" Can Christ then in the highest sense be God?

The one God is self-existent, or necessarily existent. He neither produced himself; nor was he produced by any being or cause extraneous to himself. Indeed no being or cause existed previously to his existence. But Jesus Christ is the *first born of every creature, and the beginning of the creation of God.* Was there not a time then when he did *not exist*? And must he not have derived his existence from another—from God, his Father? Is it then to be admitted that he is self-existent and independent?

The One God can never desert or forsake himself, nor, if the expression be allowable, any part of himself. This, in no sense, can be the case. But he can, in a variety of senses, desert or forsake other beings. And this he sometimes does. He even deserted or forsook Jesus Christ, his beloved Son, when he was suffering on the cross. This occasioned him to exclaim, "*My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?*" Whom, Sir, did Christ address when he uttered this pathetic exclamation or prayer? Did he address himself, or pray to himself? As there is but one God possessed of all divine attributes, must not Christ have directed this address to himself, if these attributes were his? But in this there is too great an incongruity for your belief. Did he then address his *Father*—and his *Father exclusively*? If so, he did not address a *Triune God*. But should it be said that the term *Father* implies a *Trinity in Unity*, I would ask, by what authority is this said? Should it however be admitted, must it not also be admitted that Christ prayed to *himself* as well as to his Father, for Christ is included in the Trinitarian God-head. I have further to ask—whether Christ, as to his supposed divine nature, had forsaken his human nature when the prayer under consideration was made? This, I should think, must have been the case, if the "*Father alone* is not the Supreme God," or if the supposed divine nature of Christ is essential to the being or existence of the Supreme God. But how could the supposed divine nature of Christ have forsaken his human nature, if it were "*inseparably united to it,*" or so united to it, that both constituted but one person? On the supposition, however, that his divine nature could forsake or separate itself from his hu-

man nature, and actually did so, what became of the Trinitarian *person* of Christ, whose essential and peculiar character it was to consist of two natures, divine and human? If his divine nature forsook or left his human nature, his person must have been destroyed, or, if not destroyed, a mere *infinitesimal part* of it only could have remained. But whither will these inquiries lead us? or where will they end? I stop—and only observe, that in whatever point of light the subject is viewed, it seems incapable of affording any satisfactory evidence that Jesus Christ is God in the highest sense of the word.

If Jesus Christ were in the highest sense God, must not all the things and events relating to his kingdom be under his own control, and at his own disposal? But is this indeed the case? Ought we not to be satisfied with his own decision upon the subject? “*To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them, for whom it is prepared of my Father.*” As Christ had not the disposal of the highest places in his kingdom, must not his authority in his kingdom have been subordinate to or dependent on that of his Father? Besides, how could the kingdom have been independently his own? Is he then to be considered as God supreme?

It is repeatedly and unequivocally asserted in scripture, that *God raised Jesus Christ from the dead*. The Scripture also assures us that *he was quickened by the Spirit*. But is this consistent with the supposition that he is the Lord God omnipotent? Can it with any propriety be said of the *Omnipotent Jehovah*, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of change, that *he has been dead and buried, and that he was raised from the dead by the power of God, and quickened by the Spirit*? Jesus Christ has indeed said, “No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” But we are not to be unmindful that he immediately adds, “*This commandment have I received of my Father.*” I have received *assurance* from my Father of my resurrection from the dead—that he will raise me before my flesh shall see corruption. This seems to me the most obvious and natural meaning of Christ’s declaration. But however this may be, his declaration seems incapable of any construction which does not imply his dependence on his Father. How then can it reasonably be supposed that he is the same God with his Father, or equal to his Father? and especially when it is considered that the Scripture assures us that *Jesus Christ has a God*, and a *Head*, and that he is the *possession or property* of his God, and head?

Jesus Christ has assured us that *none, in the highest sense, is good but God his Father*—that *his Father knows what neither himself, nor any other being knows*—that *his Father is greater than himself*; and at the consummation of all things, an inspired apostle assures us, that *Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father, and that he himself will be subject unto him.*

What, Sir, shall we say to these things? Do they not seem clearly to teach us that Jesus Christ is *neither the Supreme God, nor equal to the Supreme God*? Does it not seem palpably incongruous to say that Jesus Christ is *the Mediator* between the One God and man, and yet that he himself is *that one God*? that he is the *Son of God*, and yet God himself? that he is an ambassador *from God*, and yet an ambassador *from himself*? that he came into the world *not to do his own will*, but the will of him that sent him, and yet that he *did* come into the world to *do his own will*? that of *his own self* he could *do nothing*, and yet that whatever he did, was *done by his own independent power*? that the doctrines which he taught were *not his own*, and yet that they *were his own*—originated by himself? that he *received commands from his Father*, and yet that he *received them from himself*? that he *obeyed his Father's commands*, and yet in doing this, that he *obeyed his own commands*? that he *habitually prayed to his Father*, and yet, that in doing so, he *habitually prayed to himself*? that he is the *image of God*, and yet that *very God* whose image he bears? that as an apostle and high priest he was *faithful to God* who appointed him, and yet that he *was appointed by, and faithful to himself*? that *God cannot be tempted with evil*, yet that *Christ is God*, notwithstanding he *was tempted* of the devil, and was in all points tempted like as we are? that Christ was the *first born* of every creature, and yet that he is *self-existent*? that *his being forsaken by his God*, implies that he *forsook himself*? that he had *not* the disposal of the highest places in his kingdom, and yet that he *had* the disposal of them? that *God raised him from the dead*, and that he was quickened by the *Spirit*, and yet that he *raised and quickened himself*? that *no one* in the highest sense is *good but God only*, and yet that *Christ*, who made this declaration of his Father, is *good* in the highest sense? that he *did not* know what his Father knew, and yet that he *did* know all that was known by his Father? that his Father is *greater* than himself, and yet that he is *as great* as his Father? that he will hereafter *give up his kingdom to his Father*, and be *subject to his Father*, and yet that he is *Supreme King* and will *always* remain so, and be in *subjection to none*!

Whether these contradictions are *real* or only *seeming*, you, Sir, must judge for yourself. But I am constrained to say they have so much *the appearance* of real contradictions, that, until I shall see them satisfactorily reconciled, I shall be afraid to acknowledge the supreme divinity of Christ, and to "give him *all* divine honours." Nor can I think it "a light thing," to give all divine honours to Christ as a "being" possessed of all divine attributes, when I find from the highest authority that *the God and Father of Christ is THE ONE GOD*, who seems evidently to claim, as his exclusive due, all supreme honour or worship, from all intelligent beings. If you, Sir, are in the habit of giving supreme honour or worship to two or more distinct persons or beings, permit me with much solemnity and deep concern to ask, whether you are under no apprehension that you worship two or more distinct Gods? Will you say that you worship but one God "consisting of three distinct persons equal in power and glory?" But what, Sir, is the distinction, except only in name, between *three such persons*, and *three Gods*? For my own part I can see none other than a *nominal* distinction; and you will excuse my freedom, if I say, that I am strongly apprehensive that you neither can, nor pretend clearly to mark the distinction. Ought you not then to fear that you worship you know not what, and especially when you consider that you have *neither precept nor example for the worship of a Triune God in any part of the Bible*? I pray you very seriously to consider, and re-consider this great and interesting subject. May the Fountain of all light be pleased more fully to enlighten our understandings, that we may more clearly see what is truth in relation to it.

I am not unaware, Sir, it will be said, that the passages of scripture above stated, which seem to prove that Jesus Christ is inferior to, and dependent on his Father, refer to his supposed lowest character, or human nature, in distinction from his supposed highest character, or divine nature. But if this complex character of Christ be *merely imaginary*, must not his *real* character be either wholly divine, or wholly human? This, I presume, you will readily admit.

Is it, then, a fact that Jesus Christ is a person consisting of divinity and humanity, or that he is *God and man in one numerical person*? I do think, Sir, that this very strange and mysterious doctrine ought not to be received as true, without clear and irresistible evidence. But where is this evidence to be found? If any where, you will agree with me in the belief, that it is to be found in the Bible. But does the Bible teach us that Jesus Christ possessed a soul and body like your's and mine, and that to this man

a second person of a Trinity was united, and so united that both became one person? Or that two souls, or distinct spiritual existences, infinitely disproportioned to, and different from each other, became so united to each other, and to a human body, as to constitute but one individual person or being! If the Bible really does teach this doctrine, most devoutly do I wish that I might find it in that blessed book. In examining the scripture, I find that *a man, consisting of a body and a soul*, or intelligent thinking principle, is a *real and complete person*, but I do not find that the scripture teaches that *two souls* or intelligent principles, the one divine, the other human, and *one body*, are so united together as to make *one person*. I am, therefore, afraid to admit such a heterogeneous mixture or union as a doctrine of revelation. Should I admit that the person of Christ is both God and man, must I not admit also that this same person is self-existent, independent, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, &c.? But if I admit this of *the person* of Christ, must I not admit, also, that his *humanity* which is *essential* to his person, is also *self-existent, independent, &c.*? On the other hand, if I admit that *the person* of Christ was *derived, or produced and dependent, and that it suffered, died, &c.* must I not admit that *his divinity was derived or produced, and that it suffered, died, &c.*? Is not his divinity a part, and infinitely the greatest part of *his person*? How then can these things, or *any thing*, be said of *his person*, and not of *his divinity*? But if none of these things can with propriety be said of Christ's person, how can he with propriety be considered as possessing personal existence? Surely if Jesus Christ is but *one person, or being*, consisting both of *divinity* and *humanity*, and if both these natures are *essential* to *his person*, then *this one and the same person*, must be, I should think, both *self-existent and derived; independent and dependent; unchangeable, and yet changeable*, unless it be merely a nominal or figurative person. Further, if I admit that Jesus Christ possesses the complex character which Trinitarians ascribe to him, must I not admit, also, that his person includes the Father and the Spirit? According to the Trinitarian theory, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit constitute one God, and have the same numerical essence, from which neither of the persons can be separated; how then could *either* of them be united to, and become one person with a man, without *involving the others in the same union*? But shall we say, or believe that three divine persons became so united to a man as to constitute but one person? In pursuing this theory I find myself in "intricate mazes lost." Nor can I descry a plain path till I return to "the high way" of revelation, where I find, or

seem to find Christ described, as one single person, agent, or being, possessed of one single mind, intelligence, and will, always acting by the authority, and in perfect obedience to the will of his Father. He is indeed described as possessed of his Father's fulness, or the communication of the Spirit without measure, by which he was enabled to discharge his high commission. But this circumstance, so far from proving his essential divinity and independence, seems very strongly to support the supposition that he is a derived and dependent being ; for a self-existent and independent being can neither need nor be *susceptible of the fulness of any other being*.

Now, Sir, in the view of these things permit me to ask—What think you of Christ? That he is truly God, and truly man in one person? Do you find satisfactory evidence that this is the fact? Is the supposed fact capable of proof? Is it intelligible? Or does it appear to be a doctrine of revelation? If not, what is the basis—what the support of the Trinitarian theory? Let me earnestly entreat you very seriously to consider these things again and again—to weigh them in the balance of reason, and especially in the “even balance” of revelation, lest without a warrant you should “give all divine honours to Christ,” and rob the one God “in the offerings” to which he alone has a just and sovereign claim. This surely cannot be “a light thing.” Let not this sin be laid to our charge.

I now proceed to a brief examination of Dr. Worcester's view of

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Letter 1, p. 19, The Doctor speaks of the Holy Spirit as possessing “personal divinity.” And in Letter 3, p. 25, He says, “The Holy Spirit, in essential, inseparable union with the Father, and the Son, he in them and they in him, is the living, true, and supreme God.” In Letter 2, p. 36, he says, “Orthodox christians believe that He (the Holy Spirit) like the Father and the Son, is truly and essentially divine, and that all which is truly holy and virtuous in any of mankind is to be ascribed to his sovereign and gracious agency.” Page 22, “He knows the things of God, *as the spirit of a man, knows what is in the man*, that is, by intuition, by consciousness. As the “spirit of a man is *conscious* to all that is in him—knows intuitively his understanding, and will, and affections, his thoughts, volitions, and feelings ; so the Holy Spirit is conscious to all that is in God.” “They are essentially equal, each to the other ; for all that is in the Father, is in the Holy Spirit.” Several other similar observations concerning the Holy Spirit occur in the Doctor's Letters. But as

they would probably afford no additional light to the subject, it were needless particularly to notice them. On the passages quoted, my remarks will be brief; the principal object of which will be to ascertain whether the Holy Spirit possesses *personal existence in distinction from the one God, the Father*. This Dr. W. supposes, and not only this, but that the person of the Spirit is *like that of the Father essentially divine, and essentially equal to the Father*. And by *person* we have seen that the Doctor means "intelligent agent," "being," "God," who "possesses all divine attributes." But is all this to be admitted with respect to the Holy Spirit? If so, I see not but he must be *separately and independently* "the living, true and Supreme God." If the Holy Spirit is a distinct person, agent, being, or God, possessed of *all divine attributes*, can any additional attribute or circumstance be necessary to constitute him *alone* the Supreme and independent Jehovah? Is not the one Supreme and independent Jehovah a person, an intelligent agent, a being and God possessed of all divine attributes? But is he possessed of *more* than these? As nothing is to be ascribed to the one Supreme God, which Dr. W. does not ascribe to the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit *alone*, on the Doctor's principles, must, so far as I can see, be the one Supreme God. Nor shall I undertake to prove that this is not the case. So far from it, that I am not disposed to controvert the truth of the hypothesis. I have indeed already admitted that the Holy Spirit is the Supreme God. But I am not prepared to admit that he is a person, agent, being or God, *distinct* from the one God even the Father; or that "all which is truly holy and virtuous in any of mankind is to be ascribed to him" as a *distinct agent* from God the Father; for it has already been shewn that God the Father is the great efficient of all that is truly holy and virtuous in man. Nor am I prepared to admit that *Holy Spirit* is always expressive of personal existence. The terms, it appears to me, are sometimes used to express the *power*, and *other particular attributes and operations or influences* of God; and that they are sometimes to be considered as strictly equivalent to *God himself*. Reasons for this my belief will presently be stated. If it should be admitted that the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Ghost, possesses a *distinct* personal existence, must it not also be admitted that he is *inferior* both to the Father and the Son? The Holy Spirit is described as the *Comforter* whom the Father is to send, in consequence of the prayers of Jesus Christ. He is also described as *sent* by the Father; as not *speaking of himself*, and as speaking *whatsoever he should hear*. He (the Holy Spirit) said our Saviour, shall *receive of mine—take of*

mine, and shall shew it unto you, my disciples. But are these representations, my dear Sir, consistent with the supposition that the Holy Spirit is a *distinct person equal to God the Father*? If this were indeed the case, can any good reason be assigned why Christ should not have directly prayed to him to come and assist his disciples, instead of praying to the Father to send him? Besides, if he were a person equal to the Father, would it be proper to represent him as being *sent* by the Father? Further, if the Holy Spirit were a person equal to God, how is it to be accounted for that instead of *speaking of himself*, from his own independent knowledge, he should be *instructed what to speak*? Or how is it to be conceived that he should *receive or take from another*, if he were a person equal to God, possessed of infinite and independent fulness? Can any of these things be said, with propriety, of the Supreme and independent God? But notwithstanding in these, and in some other passages, the Holy Spirit seems to be represented as a person distinct from, yet *unequal* to God, I am far from being satisfied that distinct personal existence is to be ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The figure *prosopopœia*, by which a change of things to persons is expressed, often occurs in scripture. *Wisdom, charity, sin and death* are here represented under personal characters, and a variety of actions are ascribed to them. Indeed almost every thing in scripture is personified, or represented as possessing personal character. Why then should it be thought incredible that a divine attribute or any influence or operation of God, should in like manner be personified? Who indeed can reasonably deny that this is really the case? Are we not in the habit, in speaking of the *providence* of God, to represent it as *a person*? We say that it is the *will* of providence that particular events take place, or do not take place; that we hear the *voice* of providence, and that providence *rules* the affairs of men, &c. But we mean nothing more by these expressions than the Divine Government and Superintendency of human affairs. Now the *Spirit* or *breath* of God, in the original acceptation of the word, no more expresses personal existence distinct from that of the existence of God himself, than the word *providence* expresses it.

That *Spirit of God* imports divine power, influence or operation, instead of a person distinct from God, appears to me extremely probable from the considerations, that in many places of scripture this same Spirit is represented as having been *poured out, shed forth, distributed*, and as *given by measure and not by measure*—or in *various degrees*—that persons were *baptized, anointed and filled with the Holy Spirit*, and that although God pours out

the Spirit, the *residue* remains with him. I know not how to reconcile these representations with the supposition that the Spirit of God is a person distinct from God himself. And when in addition to these things, I consider that no expressions of mutual love between God and his Spirit occur in the scriptures—that the Spirit is never represented as an object of prayer or doxology, and that *Spirit of God*, and *power of God* are equivalent expressions, I am afraid to admit that the Spirit of God is a person distinct from God. I think it however highly probable that *Spirit of God* sometimes denotes the very *person* of God himself, particularly in the following passages; “Whither shall I go from *thy Spirit*? or whither shall I flee from *thy presence*? If I ascend up into heaven, *thou* art there,” &c. Ps. cxxxix. 7, 8. “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” 1 Cor. ii. 11. The terms *thy Spirit*, *thy presence*, and *thou*, seem evidently to designate the person of the one and omnipresent God. And I cannot but think that the last quoted passage affords very strong, if not decisive proof that *Spirit of God* is a *synonymy* for *God himself*. It is particularly to be observed that the apostle compares the Spirit of God to the spirit of man, and reasons from the one to the other. Now if we allow that the apostle is a consistent and correct reasoner, must we not infer, that, as the spirit of a man is not a distinct person or agent from the man himself, the Spirit of God is not a distinct person, or agent, from God? This inference, although without design, is well supported, I think, by Dr. Worcester. Speaking of the Spirit, he observes, “He knows the things of God, *as the spirit of a man knows what is in the man*, that is, by intuition, by consciousness. As the spirit of a man is *conscious* to all that is in him, so the Holy Spirit is conscious to all that is in God.” The Doctor very justly observes that the spirit of a man knows what is in the man “by *intuition—by consciousness*,” that is, by *immediate* knowledge, by knowledge which is not obtained by deduction of reason, but *by perception* of what passes in *his own mind*. This is the only way in which a man knows what is *in himself*, or in which he knows *himself*. Nor can he in this way know any other man or person. Since then the Spirit knows in *this way*, by consciousness, the things of God, the Spirit must, it should seem, be God himself, for consciousness implies, *exclusively, personal knowledge, or the knowledge of one’s self*. But if these things do not afford convincing evidence that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the one God, and not a distinct person from him, the following passages compared, if duly considered, can hardly fail to

produce complete conviction. "For it is not ye, that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Matt. x. 20. "For it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Spirit." Mark xiii. 11. As *the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God the Father*, and as *God the Father is a Spirit, and a Holy Spirit*," and but *One Spirit*, must not *Spirit of God* be synonymous with *God himself*? How can it be otherwise? But if, when not personified or used figuratively, "Holy Spirit" and "Spirit of God," signifies THE ONE TRUE GOD, THE FATHER, must it not be highly improper to ascribe to the Spirit, divine honours, as a *distinct* person or being from the one God? Shall we worship an attribute, an influence or operation of God, as if it were God himself, or a distinct person from, and co-equal with God? This, Sir, I dare not do without scriptural warrant either by precept or example. But this warrant I find not. Nor do I find any mention made of the Holy Spirit as a distinct object of worship to the heavenly inhabitants, nor any thing which favors the supposition that the Spirit is such an object. Where all the inhabitants of mount Zion, the city of the living God, are enumerated, I find *God, Jesus*, the *Mediator* of the New Covenant, *angels* and *the spirits* of just men made perfect; but I find no mention made of the Holy Spirit. But is not this omission perfectly unaccountable, if the Holy Spirit is a person or being, distinct from God, and equal to God? In this same city of the living God, I find, "every creature saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." He who sitteth upon the throne, is God the Father, and the Lamb is Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, to each of whom appropriate honour or worship is given by all the holy inhabitants of heaven. But we find no honour ascribed to the Holy Spirit, nor indeed any mention made of the Holy Spirit? But how are we to account for this strange omission, if the Holy Spirit is a person equal to God? To me, Sir, it appears altogether unaccountable, and especially when I find *no intimation* in scripture that a *Triune* mode of worship was ever known to the heavenly inhabitants. Among them we find *no ascription of praise or glory to the Holy Spirit*. Nor do we find any such ascription made by any devout worshippers of God on earth, until the christian church had become greatly "*corrupted* from the simplicity" of the gospel of Christ. At that period, when moral "darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people," it was *decreed*, that the Holy Spirit was a person distinct from, and equal to the Supreme God. And then it was that the *Triune* form of worship was established *by law*, became popular

and reputedly orthodox. There were not wanting, however, at that time, those who adhered to, and advocated the Unitarian doctrine. Nor were such characters wholly extinct during the long and dreary reign of darkness in the church of Christ. The Waldenses and Albigenses nobly dared to dissent from the orthodox church, nor could the most infamous and sanguinary persecution inflicted upon them by that church, reclaim them from their reputed heresy. Embracing the Bible, and not the orthodox creed as the rule of their faith and practice, they remained steadfast in the faith, not loving their lives even unto death. Nor can it reasonably be questioned that from the period, now in view, through successive generations, Unitarians have arisen who have shone as burning lights both in the exemplariness of their lives, and in their zealous, able and successful defence of the gospel. To the zealous, intrepid, and persevering exertions of such men, it is in a great measure owing, under divine Providence, that the lamp of the gospel has not been completely extinguished—that its light has been increased in the world, and that the rights of conscience and christian liberty are now so well understood, and in so high a degree enjoyed. These are facts which ought to be known by christians generally, and particularly by *those* who identify *Unitarianism* with *infidelity*—rank *Unitarians* with *infidels*, and who are not sparing in their exertions to *destroy* the influence of Unitarian ministers; and to *annihilate* Unitarian churches. Were these facts generally known and duly considered, Trinitarians, it is presumed, would soon estimate and treat their Unitarian brethren, whose lives adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, as sincere christians; and Unitarians would be incited so to emulate the great and noble virtues of those who have sealed their faith with their blood, as to have a more just and indubitable claim to the respect and cordial affection of Trinitarian christians.

Here, Sir, my remarks on the Holy Spirit would terminate, were it not that you probably consider the circumstance that *this same Spirit is the "Spirit of Christ,"* as affording evidence in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, and of the distinct personality of the Spirit. I am not unaware that considerable stress is laid on this circumstance by Trinitarians as favouring their theory. But that it really does so, I am far from being satisfied. May not the Holy Spirit be called the Spirit of Christ because the Father imparted it to him in an extraordinary manner, and because by the instrumentality of Christ, it was communicated to the apostles and primitive christians? But as Christ *received it* from the Father, must it not have been the Father's originally and independently, and Christ's by

communication, or in a secondary sense? But what are we to understand by *the Spirit* as imparted by the Father to Christ, but *the power, the influence, the fulness of the Father*, in an immeasurable degree? As God anointed or endued Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit *on this account* may with propriety be called *his Spirit*. But is it from this circumstance to be inferred, that the Holy Spirit is a divine person in the Godhead? The circumstance will not, I should think, justify such an inference. Nor can I be satisfied that any circumstance found in scripture respecting the Holy Spirit, affords evidence either decisive or probable of its distinct personal existence.

Whether the above remarks will afford you any satisfaction, or whether they will assist you in discovering what, or how great is the difference in sentiment between us, or others, in relation to the Holy Spirit, I know not. For my own part, I confess that I do not know the real and precise difference between Trinitarians and Unitarians in respect to this subject. Dr. Worcester indeed, and other Trinitarian writers, speak of the Holy Spirit as “possessing personal divinity”—as “knowing the things of God, as the spirit of a man knows what is in man,” and as “God.” But do not Unitarians admit the correctness of these representations? This, I presume, is generally, if not universally the case. As to myself I do not hesitate to say, that I consider the Holy Spirit as *personally divine*, as *God*, and as knowing the things of God, as the spirit of a man knows what is in man, or in himself. But I cannot be satisfied that the Holy Spirit is *another*, or *a distinct God* from the Father, and equal to the Father, or that the terms *always* denote a person. Nor can I suppose that Dr. Worcester and other Trinitarians believe this of the Holy Spirit, for however incorrect some of their expressions, they solemnly profess to believe in the existence of but one Supreme God. Believing then, as I sincerely do, that the Holy Spirit is God, “possessed of all divine attributes,” and that there is but one God possessed of these attributes, what is the difference between the Dr.’s belief and mine? That there is a verbal difference between us, is very obvious—that there is otherwise a circumstantial difference between us, is probable; nor will I deny that the difference between us is radical—essential. But it is my hope that such a difference does not exist. I do not indeed understand some of the Dr.’s expressions respecting the Holy Spirit, which *seem* to represent him as a distinct person, agent, being, God, from the one God the Father, as equal to the Father, and as the Supreme God by virtue of an inseparable union with the Father and the Son. Were I allowed to understand such representations according to their most

natural and obvious meaning, my conclusion would be that Dr. Worcester and other Trinitarians believe in more Gods than one. But as he disclaims for himself and others such a belief, I must conclude that his representations mean something widely different from what they seem to mean. But fruitless are my endeavours to ascertain *what this something is*. I do think that the Doctor has nowhere told us; and strongly do I suspect that his neglect to do this, must have been owing to his inability to do it, or rather to the inexplicable nature of the doctrine which he advocates. Satisfied as I am that Dr. W. is abundantly competent to write in a luminous manner on any subject which he understands, and to explain, in an intelligible manner, the terms and expressions which he uses in writing on any such subject, I cannot account for it that he should use terms and expressions respecting the Holy Spirit, which convey no distinct and intelligible meaning, but on the supposition that he has no clear ideas of the Spirit, as a person distinct from, and equal to God. But if a man of his talents and acuteness of discernment does not convey any distinct and intelligible ideas on this subject, because on his principles it is not in his power to do it, is there not great reason to believe that his theory is involved in much confusion, and that it is not susceptible of explanation, or of being rationally believed? Instead of illustrating, it seems to me that he has greatly darkened the subject, by "words without knowledge." And I must be permitted to add, that his manner of discussing the subject, instead of removing my doubts respecting the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit, and the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity, has contributed not a little to strengthen them. To what cause this effect will be ascribed I know not, nor am I solicitous to know. But the question, what is truth, respecting the Holy Spirit and the other subjects on which I have remarked, excites my deepest solicitude. My heart's desire, and prayer to God is, that this truth, whatever it is, may soon be clearly seen, and cordially embraced, and practically regarded by christians of all denominations, and by the whole human family. Should Dr. Worcester, or myself, or each of us, be instrumental, in any degree, by what we have written, of contributing to this great and much desired event, our labour will not have been in vain. Let the Lord be praised.

CONCLUSION.

I have now, my dear Sir, agreeably to your request, communicated to you "some of my thoughts" respecting the late correspondence of the Rev. Dr. Worcester with

the Rev. Mr. Channing “on the subject of Unitarianism.” In doing this I have designedly passed over unnoticed, no text of scripture on which the Dr. seemed to rely as evidence in support of the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, or of the essential divinity of Jesus Christ, or of the personal divinity of the Holy Spirit. Nor have I designedly made any misrepresentation of his statements or views; nor declined to notice any of his arguments in support of the Trinitarian theory, which I considered as having a claim to serious consideration. I dare not, however, peremptorily say that I have done him strict justice. It is indeed not unlikely that I have with respect to some things misapprehended his meaning; and that with respect to others I have said things which may not have a just bearing. Should this have been the case, I have to express my regret, with this apology, that in writing my review of Dr. W.’s Letters, I have been able to avail myself of only detached portions of time—a circumstance which I have found not a little unfavourable to my object of pursuit. You will allow to this apology, I will presume, its just due.

The principal object of my review, you must perceive to have been to ascertain whether the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of all, be *alone* the Supreme God. Whether it has been made to appear that this is really the fact, you will decide for yourself. For my own part, I have to say, that if the evidence produced to substantiate the fact is not completely demonstrative, it appears too forcible to be easily resisted.

If then there is but one Supreme God, *the Father*, is it not a truth too obvious to admit of reasonable controversy, that all other beings denominated Gods, whether in heaven or in earth, are subordinate to, and dependent on God the Father for their dignity and perfections?

If the Father alone is the one Supreme God, as the scripture seems unequivocally to teach us, does it not necessarily follow that the Supreme God is *one Person*? Have we not indeed the express testimony of scripture that this is the case, and that “Jesus Christ is the express image of HIS PERSON?” But have we any such assurance that the one God is more than one Person? What is the foundation then, on which the Trinitarian theory is built?

If unto us there is but one God, even the Father, by what authority is it asserted that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God in the highest sense, or that he is equal to his Supreme Father? Did not Jesus Christ disclaim this character in all that he said of himself, and of his Father; and particularly in that decisive and unequivocal declaration, “My Father is greater than I?” Are you not then afraid, Sir, that in saying that Jesus Christ is God, in the su-

preme sense, or that he is as great as his Father, you will be found to contradict his testimony, greatly to dishonour his character, and to fight against the Supremacy of his God and our God?

If God the Father is alone the Supreme God, must not he alone be the object of *supreme worship*? Does not this inference seem both just and necessary? And is it not supported by an authority from which there should be no appeal? “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him *only* shalt thou serve.”—“Worship him, all ye gods.” Agreeably with these injunctions, did not Jesus Christ, who sustained the title of God, always worship his Father as a Being of unrivalled glory, and “far exalted above all gods?” Are you under no apprehension, then, that in worshipping three persons, intelligent agents, or beings, each possessed of all divine attributes, you become chargeable with practical disregard of “the first of all the commandments,” and of a departure from the practice of HIM who hath “set us an example that we should follow his steps?” The hour, my dear Sir, “is coming, and now is, when the *true worshippers* shall *worship the Father* in spirit and in truth.” As the scriptures teach us that “there is but one God, the Father,” who is “above all”—even “above all Gods,” is it not much to be lamented that many christian churches should require of those, who are desirous of enjoying with them christian communion, at the Lord’s table, a *denial* of the Supremacy of the Father, or that he alone is the Supreme God? Is the acknowledgment that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are persons, agents, or beings distinct from the Father, and that each of them is God, possessed of all divine attributes, consistent with the Supremacy of the one God, the Father? And yet it is insisted on as a test of orthodoxy—as a touchstone of an anti-idolatrous heart, and as a passport to the enjoyment of a precious gospel institution, to which all were originally admitted, who professed to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of the Supreme Father! How sad—how melancholy is the consideration that a profession of this same faith, and the most exemplary life, in a moral and religious view, should be considered by so many christian ministers and churches as utterly insufficient to entitle a person to their fellowship! I cannot but strongly apprehend, Sir, that this is utterly a fault among them.

Do the scriptures teach us that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is alone the Supreme God? Is it not then much to be regretted that general associations, and many minor associations of christian ministers, should create and employ a combined influence to discourage and prevent the reception and progress of this great and import-

ant truth? Will not many individual christians, and christian churches, be likely, through this powerful influence, to admit, adhere to, and intemperately defend the doctrine of the Trinity as a criterion of christian piety, and an indispensable term of christian communion, without due examination, and without suspecting that the doctrine is incompatible with the Supremacy of the Father, or the Divine Unity? Will not pious young men, preparing for the sacred ministry, or entered upon its functions, be improperly biassed and directed by this same influence in their religious opinions and theological pursuits? And will not public opinion also be formed, established and directed by its instrumentality, without the salutary aid of free inquiry, diligent research, and impartiality of judgment? These and other evils have already resulted, I apprehend, from this formidable influence. Nor, so long as it shall exist unimpaired, is it to be expected, that such evil results will be less either in number, in magnitude, or in extent. But is this influence always to exist with unabated strength? Future time must decide.

If the Father alone is the Supreme God, it becomes a very serious and interesting question whether christians, who believe this doctrine, can consistently with a good conscience and the christian character disguise their belief, or, in any way, give countenance and support to a doctrine, which appears to them repugnant to it? That christians, in whose character there should be no guile, should in any instances be suspected of duplicity in their religious faith and practice, is to be regretted;—that they should occasion *just* suspicion of this, is a subject for much deeper regret; and that they should *persist* in giving such occasion, seems to imply that fear of man which brings an entangling and pernicious snare to the soul. Such conduct admits neither of justification nor satisfactory apology. But are there any members of Trinitarian churches who are justly chargeable with this highly improper and exceptionable conduct? What, my dear Sir, shall we say of those, who, firmly believing that the Father *alone* is the Supreme God, apparently assent to, and virtually patronize a creed which avows the existence, and demands a belief in the existence of two more co-equal persons or agents? Are not such members of churches guilty of this duplicity, by rising with the other members, when the Trinitarian creed is publicly read? Do they not rise in token of assent to the articles of that creed, some of which, to say the least, are repugnant to the dictates of their understandings, and to the feelings of their hearts? Should these our brethren plead, in vindication of their conduct, that, should they decline to give an implied assent to the creed, and especially

should they protest against it, the peace of the church would be interrupted, its prosperity endangered, and that they would subject themselves to the charge of heresy, and to excision from christian fellowship with their brethren—the plea will excite in our breast emotions of sympathy and commiseration; but it will be very far from convincing us that they are influenced, as they ought to be, by those motives and principles which are the glory of the christian profession and character.

Must not the christian, who has a just, and clear, and impressive view and sense of the true spirit and genius of our pure and holy religion, be disposed manfully to assert that liberty by which Christ has made him free? Possessed of a noble ingenuousness of heart, will he not explicitly renounce “the hidden things of dishonesty? Not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth,” will he not make it his steady object, by shunning the very appearance of evil, to “keep a conscience void of offence,” and to commend himself, by inflexible integrity of principle and conduct, to the approbation of all good men, “in the sight of God?” While he will “study the things which make for peace,” in every practicable way consistently with the uprightness of his heart, and the purity of his religious principles; yet to please man, or to secure popular applause, he will never consent to make shipwreck of his conscience, or to treat with cold neglect, much less apparently to renounce a doctrine of revelation which he believes to be of all others the most important, *the unity of God*. Must he not feel an irresistible obligation to withhold assent, even in *remote* appearance, from an article of faith which requires him professedly to deny his own faith in a doctrine which he esteems as pre-eminently important? Will he not—*must* he not, fearless of consequences, nobly dare to act according to his conviction?

These suggestions have a solemn and imperious claim to the awakened and serious consideration of all whom they immediately concern. And most devoutly is it to be hoped that they will not fail to produce effects correspondent to their importance.

If the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is alone the Supreme God, is there not much reason to apprehend that no exertions which either are, or may be made to convert the Jews and Mahometans, or even the Pagans to the christian faith will be crowned with much success, so long as the doctrine of the Trinity shall be exhibited to them, by christian instructors, as essential to the christian system? Both Jews and Mahometans, it is a well known fact, are firm believers in the doctrine of the Divine Unity, or that God

is but one person? Is it then to be expected, and especially if this doctrine is true, that many of them will ever be persuaded to embrace a doctrine which avows the existence of two other persons, agents, beings, or Gods, equal to God the Father? To this doctrine they object as exhibiting the strongest features of polytheism; as connected with idolatry, and as highly impious. Is it to be expected then, that they will cease to urge this objection so long as the occasion of it shall continue? But is the doctrine friendly to the conversion of the Heathens? Will they not be likely to object to it as favouring idolatry, and as truly so as their belief in a plurality of Gods? Can it then reasonably be expected that they will abandon a system of idolatry, to which they have so long been attached, and accustomed to hold in the highest reverence, for another system which seems to favour an idolatrous worship?

As these suggestions demand the serious attention of missionary societies, and christian missionaries, it is to be hoped that they will not be treated with indifference and neglect. But in whatever light they may be viewed, or whatever may be their effect, it is not to be doubted that the christian religion, notwithstanding all the obstacles now in the way, will ere long be universally embraced in its native purity. The translation of the Bible, *without note or comment*, into every language under heaven, and its dispersion among all the tribes of men, will, it is presumed, *beyond all other means* contribute to the accomplishment of this great and glorious event. To the translation of the Bible, then, and to its circulation in all the destitute parts of the world, christians of all denominations should turn their eager attention, and combine, for the accomplishment of this most desirable object, their zealous and persevering efforts.

Thus may the Holy Scriptures soon have free course, run and be glorified. May their pure and divine doctrines be well understood and cordially embraced by every nation, kingdom and tongue. May all the corruptions of christianity be soon detected, exposed and abandoned, its peaceable and benign spirit be more copiously imbibed, and its beneficent fruits more abundantly produced!

These auspicious events we joyfully anticipate as sure and steadfast. And the signs of the times encourage the hope that they cannot be far distant. Among these, the late controversy "on the subject of Unitarianism" is not to be overlooked. With Dr. Worcester, I believe that "the points in discussion are among the most important, that could be offered to the attention of the christian community." And "that though some ill effects may ensue, as, in a world like this, is always to be expected, when

any thing is attempted for the cause of truth ; yet the persuasion is continually extending and gaining strength, that the good effects will greatly preponderate." That this may soon, and more visibly be the happy case—that the truth respecting the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, may be clearly seen and cordially embraced—that the inspired scriptures may be universally received as the standard of faith and practice, to the exclusion of all unscriptural and anti-scriptural words and phrases from every religious creed in Christendom—that the “ faith of christians should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God—that “ all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking,” *on all sides*, may utterly cease—that all may speak the same thing, and be perfectly joined together in the same judgment—that a spirit of unhallowed war and contention, of whatever kind, may give place to a spirit of peace and fraternal affection, and that the world may be filled with the divine glory, is the ardent prayer and confident expectation of, dear Sir, your sincere friend, and servant, as well in the consolations, as afflictions, of the gospel of our LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.



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